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THE GREAT VICTORIAN AGE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A SHORT HISTORY OF SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

Cheaper Edition. Price 3/6

This is a delightful sketch of the material conditions in which our ancestors lived and died. There are brief glimpses of their houses, food, clothes, manners, punishments, families, gardens, education, and social development. For instance, the reader may learn that William the Conqueror ate with his fingers, and never saw a coal fire; that the two thousand cooks of Richard II. could make neither plum pudding nor mince pie; that Chaucer never saw a printed book; that Queen Elizabeth never heard of tea or a newspaper; that George I. had no umbrella; and that Queen Victoria was the first sovereign who tried locomotion by steam. The gradual levelling of social distinctions, as described in these pages, presents no more striking development than the rise of democratic power as we know it to-day.

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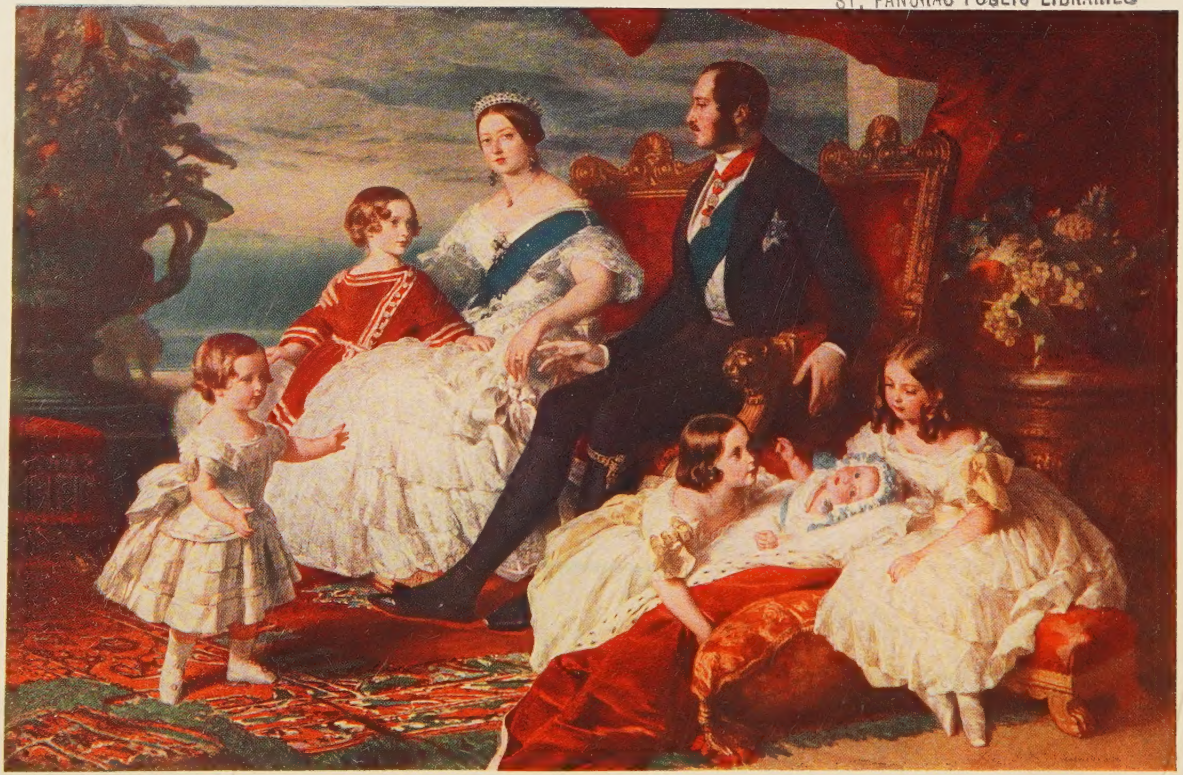

THE ROYAL FAMILY.

From the Picture by Winterhalter in Buckingham Palace.

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THE GREAT VICTORIAN AGE

FOR CHILDREN

ST PANCRAS PUBLIC LIBRARIES

BY

M. B. SYNGE, F.R.Hist.S.

AUTHOR OF "A SHORT HISTORY OF SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND," "THE STORY OF THE WORLD," "THE WORLD'S CHILDHOOD," ETC.

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TO

MY GODSON

HENRY

INTRODUCTION

THE history of England is no longer the history of the triumphs and failures of the British Isles. It is the history of a people dispersed over boundless space, one in blood, in language, in religion, in laws—a people descended from the same forefathers, reared on the same traditions, upholding the same ideals, fighting under the same flag, acknowledging the same Sovereign, and calling England—Home.

The fact that some of these people have overflowed from one land to another does not break the tie that binds them together. It is still—

"One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne."

It is for the children of these people that the chief events in the great Victorian Age have been written, that they may realise how their fathers built up the Empire of which each child is a member.

Much has been necessarily omitted; the aim of

the book is rather to suggest than inform, rather to create a desire for further knowledge on each subject as it arises, than to crowd the mind with facts and dates, which do not conduce to general intelligence.

Some account has been given of the men and women who helped to make their country so great during this wonderful age. But it must not be forgotten how many more there were who dared—

> "For that sweet mother-land which gave them birth
> Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their names,
> Given on memorial columns, are a song
> Heard in the future
>
> * * * * *
>
> . . . their examples reach a hand
> Far thro' all years."

Many great names will shine beyond the age itself. There were great soldiers, like Lawrence and Nicholson; great statesmen, such as Gladstone and Disraeli; great poets, as Browning and Tennyson; great men of letters, like Carlyle and Ruskin; great painters, like Turner and Watts; great men of science, like Darwin and Huxley; great teachers, like Maurice and Martineau; great explorers, like Franklin and Livingstone; great empire-builders, like Lord Durham and Cecil Rhodes.

Great deeds were done too, deeds never to be

surpassed, such as the Charge of the Light Brigade, the Relief of Lucknow, the Defence of Rorke's Drift, Wilson's last stand at Shangani, the Wreck of the *Birkenhead*, Captain Kane and the *Calliope*, the 66th at Helmund, and Gordon's fearless heroism at Khartum.

These events are related, not in a spirit of boastful pride, but rather to inspire the children of to-day with a love of the country for which their near kinsmen have died, and a feeling of individual responsibility as members of so great a heritage, remembering that "to whom much has been given, of him shall much be required."

"Our word is peace, our rights are equal laws,
Our arms of love we spread from sea to sea,
Our life is progress toward the broader cause,
Our hope, through justice, to give liberty."

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ILLUSTRATIONS

THE QUEEN, PRINCE ALBERT, AND THE ROYAL FAMILY
(From Winterhalter's picture) . *Frontispiece*

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I

VICTORIA—QUEEN OF ENGLAND

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new."
—TENNYSON.

THE Princess Victoria became Queen of England on June 20, 1837, just five weeks after keeping her eighteenth birthday. She died on January 22, 1901, having reigned for sixty-three years over a kingdom which, during this period, had grown into the mightiest Empire the world has yet seen.

The wonderful story of its growth is the subject of this history. It is a story which has no equal in the annals of time.

But perhaps before dealing with the forces that make up the famous Victorian Age, as it is sometimes called, it will be interesting to note something of that young girlish Queen, who was so suddenly called to a position of such tremendous importance.

She was the niece of William IV. and daughter of the Duke of Kent, his younger brother. Heir after heir to the throne of England had died, and by the time the little Princess Victoria was twelve years old it became evident that she would succeed her old uncle as the Queen of England.

For this great post she was educated with the greatest care by her widowed mother, so that when

the change came it found her prepared to discharge her offices with a high sense of public duty.

William IV. died in the early morning hours of June 20th, at Windsor Castle. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain hurried off at once to London to break the news to the young Princess, who was sleeping peacefully in her old home at Kensington Palace. They arrived about five o'clock in the morning, and it was some time before they could rouse the porter at the gate. At last they gained admittance into the courtyard, and after some difficulty they were shown into a room and apparently forgotten.

No one seemed to realise the greatness of the moment.

"We are come *to the Queen* on business of State," they assured the sleepy household.

These words at last had the desired effect and soon the young Queen stood before them; her feet were only in slippers, her hair was down her back, a shawl was thrown round her shoulders. It was a never-to-be-forgotten moment when the Archbishop and the Lord Chamberlain fell on their knees before her and saluted her as Queen of England.

Her great responsibilities had begun—responsibilities which she laid down only with her life. The quiet, uneventful life she had led alone with her mother at Kensington Palace was to be exchanged for a life of publicity, tried ever by that "fierce light that beats upon a throne."

Before nine o'clock on that morning the Prime Minister of the Whig Government, Lord Melbourne, arrived to teach the young Queen her duties for the first Council meeting of the new reign at eleven o'clock.

Perhaps no one was quite prepared for the simple dignity with which she performed her part. She read the speech written for her in a clear, untroubled voice before some hundred strange Privy Councillors.

"Educated in England under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother," ran the stilted language of the declaration, "I have learned from infancy to respect and love the Constitution of my native country."

All through that long day, the great bell of St. Paul's tolled for the dead King. Meanwhile the new Queen was preparing for her formal Proclamation on the morrow. She was enthusiastically received by her new subjects, and a continuous shout of "Long live the Queen!" greeted her as she drove to St. James's Palace. Dressed in deep mourning, with a large black bonnet, she appeared at the open window of the Privy Council Chamber while the guns fired a royal salute and bands played the National Anthem.

As the shouts of the people rose on the summer air the young Queen burst into tears. She was but eighteen, and, as her boy-lover Albert expressed it, she was Queen of the "mightiest land of Europe." The position was at first overwhelming.

"The Queen wishes to be alone," she said to her mother on her return to Kensington Palace. Alone amid her familiar surroundings, she wished to dedicate herself to her country and her God.

It was a new experience for the English people to have a Queen over them. "Let us hope," they said, "that we are going to have an Elizabeth without her tyranny, an Anne without her weakness." They did not hope in vain.

The Queen's reign began with an act of mercy

which augured well for a future, wherein mercy and pity have played such a large and important part. It was the duty of the sovereign at this time to sign the death-warrant of those condemned, after just trial, to die. Soon after her accession the old Duke of Wellington presented a paper of this sort for her to sign.

"Have you anything to say for this man?" asked the Queen with tears in her eyes.

"Nothing, he has deserted three times," answered the Duke, adding, after a pause, "but though he is a very bad soldier, I believe him to be a good man."

"Oh, thank you for that a thousand times!" cried the Queen as she wrote the word "Pardoned" on the paper with a trembling hand and returned it to the Duke.

She now took up her abode at Buckingham Palace, which had been built for her uncle, George IV. The hard work of her life had begun in earnest, and she gave her whole attention to learning the affairs of her State. For though in this country the government is in the hands of the people, yet there are numerous documents of the highest importance, all requiring the royal signature. She rose daily at eight and signed despatches before breakfast. At twelve the Ministers of State arrived and serious work began; each document was read by the Queen in silence. Lord Melbourne was ever at her right hand, instructing her in her great duties, explaining difficult situations, and guiding her through the intricacies of the English Constitution.

At the end of a year mourning for the late King was over, and the young Queen was crowned in the presence, not only of her loyal subjects, but of repre-

sentatives from France, Spain, Sweden, Hanover, Prussia, Russia, Austria, and other foreign nations.

At dawn on June 28, 1838, London was roused from fitful sleep by the thundering of guns from the Tower, and soon throngs of gaily dressed people were surging up and down the London streets. In her state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, the Queen drove to Westminster Abbey. She was no longer unknown and untried; she had won the hearts of her subjects by a thousand kind and considerate acts, and as she appeared, radiant with health and youth, the air was rent with shouts from the mighty crowds.

Inside the old weather-beaten Abbey, the scene of so many past coronations, a marvellous procession awaited the Queen; there were bishops and archbishops, princes and princesses of royal blood, and foreign visitors from European Courts. The Queen, dressed in crimson velvet, trimmed with ermine fur and bordered with gold lace, walked to her place in the choir while the Westminster boys chanted, "Vivat Victoria Regina!" Then the Archbishop presented her to the people.

"Sirs," he cried aloud in the traditional language of the service, "I here present unto you Queen Victoria, the undoubted Queen of this realm: wherefore all you who are this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?"

The answer came solemnly: "God save the Queen!"

As the sounds echoed away the trumpets sounded, the drums rolled, and the band struck up the National Anthem. Then the Queen took the Coronation Oath, promising to maintain the law of the land and the national religion of the Church of England. "The

things which I have here promised I will perform and keep. So help me God!"

At the end of five hours the great service was ended and the Queen was Queen indeed. Wearing her crown, she drove home through crowds of loyal English men and women.

"Poor little Queen!" said Thomas Carlyle, who watched with others the return journey. "Poor little Queen! She is at an age at which a girl can hardly be trusted to choose a bonnet for herself, yet a task is laid upon her from which an archangel might shrink."

II

A SKETCH OF ENGLAND IN 1837

"The time is ripe and rotten ripe for change.
Then let it come: I have no dread of what
Is called for by the instinct of mankind."—SHELLEY.

TO understand the wondrous achievements of the Victorian Age it will be well to glance for a moment at the condition of the country, when the young Queen came to the throne.

It was a very different England at that time—an England without any rapid means of communication, without trains or steamers, motors or bicycles, without telegrams, telephones, postage stamps, envelopes or post cards, an England without gas or electric light or even matches. Neither were there many schools for the children of the people.

The people themselves looked quite different too. They wore clothes of brighter colours; men wore gay coats and waistcoats, they wound thick cravats round their necks, and wore whiskers and long hair.

Women wore their hair divided in the centre and brushed smoothly down over their ears; they wore full skirts with high waists, and large bonnets trimmed with light ribbons. No one dreamt of

dressing children in warm clothes ; they went about in winter and summer alike with low-necked frocks and short sleeves, and socks instead of stockings on their legs. Children were very strictly brought up, the stick was freely used, and they addressed their parents as "Sir" and "Madam." The children of the poor, in the absence of Elementary Schools, were taught more by their mothers ; girls learnt to sew and cook and wash as a matter of course, though in many cases they could neither read nor write.

Indeed, there were very few books to read, and these were expensive and rare ; there were no free libraries. Neither were there any swimming baths—baths were not considered necessary at this time. Eton boys had one bath a term, and that was the night before they returned home for the holidays. The importance and comfort of cleanliness has dawned with the progress of the century.

Other habits of life were different too. Beer was the universal drink for rich and poor, spirits were hardly used as yet ; there was no five o'clock tea, tea itself was expensive. On the other hand, all food was home-grown: bread was made from home-grown corn, beef and mutton were home-fed oxen and sheep, butter was churned in the country farmsteads by the farmer's wife and daughters, home-cured bacon was the cheapest food for the poor man's breakfast ; there were no tinned milks or meats in those days. But food was expensive in the times before the great ocean steamers brought foreign and colonial food-stuffs to our shores to be sold at a cheaper rate than that at which we can produce our own.

Wages were low, the working man was badly housed; he had as yet no vote in the government

of his country, no newspaper to tell him what was going on elsewhere. Many more people lived in the country, for the great migration to the large towns had but lately begun. Life altogether was less restless; there was no annual outing to the sea-side. Perhaps it was more monotonous, for there were fewer interests; people were hopelessly separated in these days of stage-coaches, which were expensive luxuries at best. Folk lay dying and there was no possibility of summoning an absent son or brother by telegram; posting was expensive and slow.

Medicine, too, was in a backward stage. People were still bled for every ailment, and operations were almost impossible before the invention of chloroform.

Women were little educated; there were no women nurses or doctors. Instead of seeking professions, they worked at home, they wove their own linen, they took exercise on horseback, and played little part in public life. They married young and devoted themselves to their households.

There was no emigration to speak of at this time; the young men could find plenty of occupation at home. For Great Britain had work for all her sons and daughters, and there was no British Empire as there is to-day. Australia was just a convict station, South Africa a little territory about the Cape of Good Hope, from which the Dutch farmers had just trekked beyond the Orange river; Canada had not stretched to the far West, New Zealand was inhabited by natives only. Few people thought much of these scattered possessions, some did not even know where they lay on the map.

But new forces were at work, new ideas were in the air, new men and women were coming to the

front to render their highest services to their country and their Queen.

> "Land of our birth, we pledge to thee
> Our love and toil in the years to be
> When we are grown and take our place
> As men and women with our race."

III

AN AGE OF PROGRESS

"On and always on."—TENNYSON.

IT is a somewhat startling fact, which cannot be too strongly emphasised, that at the Queen's accession no British Empire existed, and that Britons, strong, brave, and able, built up what we know to-day as the British Empire in the course of the Victorian Era.

The building of such an Empire was not possible at this early date, but as the years rolled on several great inventions gave birth to a new condition of things.

The development of more rapid communication between man and man at the very beginning of the reign was of huge importance. In 1830 the first passenger train had been driven between Liverpool and Manchester at the rate of twelve miles an hour, by the inventor, George Stephenson, himself. The year of the Queen's coronation a man could travel from Liverpool to London, a distance of 210 miles, in ten hours, a journey that had taken at least sixty hours in the old coaching days.

Lines were being hurriedly laid down all over the country connecting the large towns one with

another, and every month found new trains running cautiously over them. Still, the danger of travelling was great, and few passengers took their seats in the rough carriages of those early days without wondering whether it might not prove a last venture! Stations were few and far between, no smoking was allowed for fear of fire, signalling was yet in its infancy, and the now familiar Bradshaw's Guide, with its thousand pages, consisted of six pages in the year of its birth, 1839.

As to the third-class passengers, they were packed into open cattle-trucks, railway servants were forbidden to attend to them, their trains might not exceed twelve miles an hour, and for this they had to pay 1½d. a mile.

The same rapid progress was taking place with regard to steamers. The first steamer had made its way across the Atlantic in 1819, the very year that Queen Victoria was born. Improvements in steam had been taking place all through her childhood, until the year after her accession, England was almost startled by the news that a steamer—the *Great Western*—with sixty-five passengers and twenty thousand letters had crossed the Atlantic from Bristol to New York in fifteen days, having succeeded in carrying fuel enough for the whole voyage. Henceforth a regular line of steamers plied between England and America, and Liverpool sprang into fame as a landing-stage, taking the place of Bristol.

It is almost impossible to explain in words the vast importance of the use of steam as a motive force. It is only as the history of our own times unfolds itself almost breathlessly before us, that we realise the revolution it caused in every branch of our industry.

Yet it was not without a sigh that English seamen let the old sailing ship go, in spite of difficulties.

"Full thirty feet she towered from water line to rail,
It cost a watch to steer her and a week to shorten sail."

A wonderful picture in the National Gallery by the artist Turner, exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1838, of the old wooden battleship *Téméraire* dragged to her last berth gives some idea of the almost touching affection which clung about this "passing of the long ships."

"There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.
* * * * *
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire, Téméraire!"

Men could not grasp at once how the new and rapid means of transit would bring together distant countries, how the new steamers could shorten the distance, which separated mother from son and husband from wife, how they could carry perishable goods, increase the commerce of the world and the material prosperity of the people.

Another change of far-reaching importance was the introduction of the penny post throughout England. In 1837 Rowland Hill had advocated uniform postage, which had already existed in London; but beyond this area postal rates were very high, often more than a shilling, which was paid by the recipient of the letter and not by the writer. Nevertheless these were days of good letter-writing, an art which was dropped with the advent of the

penny post. The fast growing internal trade of the British Isles had suffered severely from the delay and expense of the post. And though the population of the country was increasing by leaps and bounds, yet it was a fact that the money taken by the General Post Office had not increased.

An illustration of the hardships of the system was brought to light by the poet Coleridge when walking in the North of England. He noticed one day that the country postman delivered a letter to a poor woman, demanding at the same time a shilling, which she could not afford to pay. Coleridge insisted on paying the postage, and was surprised at the unwillingness of the poor woman to accept. As soon as the letter was her own she showed her would-be benefactor that inside was a blank sheet of paper. She then explained that she had a plan, by which her brother should send her a blank sheet once a quarter and having looked at the packet outside, she might conclude he was well. She was but one of many denied the right of free communication with her fellow-creatures, because she had not the means to pay.

Rowland Hill now planned penny post for the whole country, and in 1840 anybody could send a letter to any part of the British Isles for one penny if it did not weigh more than half an ounce, a limit which twenty-five years later was raised to one ounce and to-day is four ounces.

The success was astounding. Penny stamps were eagerly bought by people who rejoiced in the new facilities for letter-writing. Forty years later every person in the United Kingdom was writing a letter a week, and to-day the average is far higher. There was closer intercourse of home with home and

friend with friend, but of more importance still was the ease with which customer and dealer were brought into closer communication with one another. The vast importance of this will be apparent later.

Still quicker communication was established by the wonderful invention of the electric telegraph the very year of the Queen's accession. It was the result of patient toil, the final triumph of which was shared by England and America. The telegraph was first used along the railway lines of the Great Western Railway, but its value was not realised till some ten years after this, when the great importance of the new invention dawned on the public mind.

Thus the Victorian Age opened with mighty changes, the result of long years of mental toil. The old stage-coach gradually vanished and the railway train took its place. The sailing ships gave way to the new steamer, which was independent of wind and tide, while the penny post and electric telegraph made communication possible to all.

These changes alone would have made famous the reign of Queen Victoria, but the story becomes yet more wonderful.

"Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change."

IV

ACROSS THE SEAS

"Hear, for thy children call from the uttermost parts of the sea."—KIPLING.

THOUGH there was now closer communication with all parts of the British Isles, there was as yet no submarine cable to draw the distant colonies nearer to the Mother Country. England as yet took but slight interest in those of her sons and daughters, who had sailed away from British shores to make fresh homes beyond the seas. Nobody talked much about the colonies in these days, nobody cared much about them: they were fit for convicts and idlers! Indeed, many an Englishman thought that they cost more than they were worth and that the country would be better without them.

"The history of the colonies," said one politician, "is that of a series of losses and waste of capital," as he laid before his country a scheme to get rid of Ceylon and Canada as soon as possible. Great ignorance prevailed concerning these colonies, and even a Minister of her Majesty's Government did not know exactly where they all were. There was no Colonial Office, no Colonial Secretary, or any of that vast machinery, which existed later for carrying on

business connected with our colonies. They had been managed by the Board of Trade till 1802, after which they were administered by the War Office.

"Goodbye, my dear fellow," said an English Minister to a Colonial Governor on the eve of his departure to take up new work—"goodbye, and let us hear as little of you as possible."

Yet in spite of apparent neglect and indifference, in spite of England's refusal to listen to her sons crying from wild wastes of land beyond the stormy seas, these "Sons of the Island Race" were not discouraged.

In ever increasing numbers they were willing to sail east and west, where, amid toil and hardship, they were unconsciously building up the vast Empire of which we are so justly proud to-day. From the days of the old sea rovers and Vikings, Englishmen have ever been a great wandering and colonising race. The national spirit bequeathed by our forefathers never showed itself more forcibly than it did in these early Victorian days, when, bold in adventure, patient in toil, resourceful in emergency, we sailed from our island home into the unknown, to build our Empire.

Of what, then, did the so-called Empire consist at the accession of Queen Victoria? Whither went our resolute sons in those brigs and colliers and early cumbrous steamers to face an unknown future in strange wastes of land far from home and far from friends?

The most important part of the Empire at this time was undoubtedly India.* It was a smaller country than our India of to-day, with great

* See page 112.

interests in Burma and Afghanistan. It was not a colony, but a dependency. It was not a land of white men, but a land of natives to which Englishmen went first to trade, then to conquer, and then to govern.

We are not here concerned with the deeply interesting story of the conquest of India. At this time the Indian people were subjects of the young Queen, though the country was governed by the East India Company, which had been formed in the sixteenth century for trade. Under the auspices of this Company, numbers of young Englishmen went out to make new careers for themselves. Many became officers in native regiments. Thither went young Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, Henry Lawrence and his two brothers, John Nicholson, and many members of large families at home.

Some went out to trade, for here was a land destined to become eight times the size of the British Isles, with every variety of soil and climate. It produced cotton, rice, wheat, sugar, coffee, tea, silk, flax, spices, and many another article which could not be produced in the home country. So many a young Englishman made his fortune and his name in India at this time.

Another of England's most valued possessions was the West Indies, the best known of which were the Islands of Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, St. Vincent, and the Bermudas. She had eagerly acquired one after another of these islands, for their value as sugar plantations was very great. They were peopled by black men, whose labour was directed by the English. Indeed, at this time there were nine times as many inhabitants in the

West India Islands as in the whole of Australia and Cape Colony. The wealth derived from sugar plantations in these islands was enormous so long as the slave trade was allowed, and many a splendid house arose in England on the proceeds of these far-off islands. But the slave trade had just been abolished when Queen Victoria ascended the throne, and the new regulation ruined many who had negro slaves working in their sugar-plantations.

British colonists now sought other homes, and they turned to Australia, South Africa, and Canada.

Australia was as yet only half explored. It was a great lone, waterless land, considered more fit for convicts than for respectable English colonists. England had hardly realised the importance of this great continent laid at her feet by Captain Cook. France saw plainly enough what a valuable part of her growing Empire lay in the far Pacific Ocean, and Napoleon had encouraged his countrymen to possess themselves of it.

"Deprive England of her colonies," cried a famous Frenchman, "and you break down her last wall, you fill up her last ditch."

But this move on the part of France opened the eyes of England.

"How much of Australia is claimed as the dominion of Great Britain?" asked a French politician of the War Minister in London.

"The whole of it," answered the Englishman emphatically, and the Frenchman moved away in silence.

In Southern Australia the town of Adelaide had already arisen. It had been named after the reigning Queen, wife of William IV., only a year before the accession of Queen Victoria. The new

city of Melbourne, named after her Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, contained only some 450 colonists. It consisted of a few wooden huts, while a small building with an old ship's bell suspended from a tree was used as church and chapel. Sydney, with its magnificent harbour, was farther advanced and somewhat more thickly populated; but the whole country was in its infancy, and the resolute Englishmen who emigrated there were as men dead to the Mother Country. There was no Western Australia, Queensland did not exist, New South Wales and Victoria were one, and there were but 150,000 Englishmen in the whole country, where later there were four millions.

Over the neighbouring island of New Zealand the natives yet ran wild. No Englishmen had as yet undertaken the task of colonisation, and it was not till 1839 that the New Zealand Colonisation Company was formed and a pioneer expedition sailed to colonise the new country.

More advanced and nearer home were the few colonies in Africa. There were a few fever-stricken haunts on the West Coast, but the Cape of Good Hope offered a better home to British colonists. Here numbers of English had lived side by side with the Dutch, from whom it had been twice conquered, then bought as a half-way house to India.

But the abolition of slavery was resented by the Dutch farmers, or Boers, and just two years before the Queen's accession they had marched away into the plains beyond the Orange River into a region where no white man lived, whence they migrated later to another tract of waste land known to us as the Transvaal. As yet England played no part in Egypt or the Sudan, Uganda was only half ex-

plored, Rhodesia occupied by natives only, Nigeria was desert land.

Such, then—apart from Canada *—was the extent of Greater Britain when Queen Victoria came to the throne. There was no thought of Empire in connection with these scattered possessions at this time.

Nevertheless one name stands out amid the confused mass of early colonial history, one man at this time looked ahead beyond the misty seas for his country's good; and in Gibbon Wakefield we have the first man who studied the art of colonisation, the first enthusiast who tried to create strong links between England and her distant possessions, and who encouraged her children to fill up those "vast spaces washed by sun" in far-off lands. And all unconsciously they built up an Empire such as no man has built before, an Empire whose future lies entirely in the hands of the children in our schools to-day.

"You, you, if you should fail to understand
What England is and what her all-in-all—
On you will come the curse of all the land
Should this old England fall
Which Nelson left so great."

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* See page 22.

V

OUR FIRST IMPERIALIST
(1838–1840)

"I called my chiefs to council
In the din of a troubled year,
For the sake of a sign ye would not see
And a word ye would not hear."—KIPLING.

THE first troubles in the new Queen's reign came from the colonies; for, as we have already seen, the English people did not understand the wishes of those who had crossed the broad seas to make their new homes in the West.

Canada was our oldest as it was our nearest colony, and there were more English people living there than in Australia, South Africa, or New Zealand.

At this time Canada was divided into two distinct colonies—Upper Canada, to which our people went, and Lower Canada, which was occupied mostly by the French. They had possessed the land long years before Wolfe won it for England on the heights of Abraham in 1758. Strife had arisen between the two provinces, strife between English and French colonists, between Protestants and Roman Catholics, between those advanced settlers from the Mother Country and the old settlers who prided

themselves on their splendid isolation and kept up the customs and traditions of a bygone age.

Thus it came to pass that the accession of the young Queen, received with rejoicings in every distant colony, was received in sullen silence along the banks of the River St. Lawrence. There the French Canadians felt no thrill of joy, and a few months later smouldering discontent broke into open rebellion.

The English Government felt that steps must be taken at once. Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, had no belief in the future of the British Empire; he felt sure that one day, before long, Canada would separate herself from the Mother Country, but for the honour of England he did not wish the separation to come while he was yet responsible for her. He now selected a young statesman, Lord Durham, of whose wisdom and ability he thought very highly, and begged him to go over and quell the rebellion, suggesting at the same time remedies for the future.

"Will you render this great and important service to her Majesty, her Ministers, and the country?" he wrote. "You are the fittest man for it—you have every quality which will enable you to perform such a duty."

Lord Durham felt he could not refuse such an earnest request, and on April 24, 1838, he and his wife — a close friend of the young Queen and a member of the Royal household — left Plymouth for Canada, a distance of 4,000 miles. These were days when steamers were yet in their infancy, and sailing ships took months to perform the voyage. Thus it was the 27th of May when the new Governor-General of Canada anchored at Quebec and drove up the steep summit of the hill to his

new home in the Castle of St. Louis. He found the whole country seething with rebellion, but his first words gave the people confidence.

In the new Governor the colonists found a man ready to listen to their grievances and to suggest remedies, a man who impressed them as being at once sympathetic, courageous, firm, and just. He spoke to them of the greatness of the Mother Country, till he re-awakened in the people of British North America the old pride of their race; he entreated them to use every effort to develop their fertile soil and expand their trade instead of quarrelling among themselves. They had thought that England was indifferent to them, that she was ready to abandon them, but this idea "vanished like the snows of a Canadian winter at the birth of spring" so soon as the young Englishman's influence was felt.

The task that lay before Lord Durham was indeed colossal. It required the greatest skill and statesmanship, but he had already worked out a gigantic project for the welfare of the country. He understood that he had been given full powers to act in Canada as he thought best, but his work was soon shadowed by misunderstandings with the home Government.

And here let us just remind ourselves that communication was still very slow, there was no telegraph, and that it took two full months to get an answer from England to the most important letters. So that Lord Durham was often obliged to act before leave had been obtained from home.

"If you will only support me," he wrote pathetically three months after his arrival, in answer to a letter disapproving of some action, "I will answer for handing over to you, in a few months, all the

North American Provinces in a state of loyalty and contentment."

One of the most pressing questions was the treatment of those rebels who had risen against the Mother Country. Lord Durham was a merciful man; he was also firm, dictatorial, and impatient of interference. He decided to celebrate the coronation of the young Queen by pardoning all the rebels save eight. These, having confessed their guilt, he proposed transporting to Bermuda for life.

"Not one drop of blood has been shed," he wrote to the Queen on her coronation day; "the guilty have received justice, the misguided mercy."

His action was approved throughout Upper and Lower Canada, as also in the United States, and papers announcing this policy were forwarded to the home Government. They reached England at the end of July and raised a very storm of abuse and fury. The new Governor, cried the people, had exceeded his rights. He was punishing rebels without giving them a fair trial. It was not consistent with the principles of English freedom. They did not stop to reflect that they were 4,000 miles away from the man who had studied the question on the spot.

Meanwhile Lord Durham, all unconscious of anything amiss, was touring through the country making plans for the welfare of the colonists and submitting to them his great idea of the union of Upper and Lower Canada in one dominion.

"The country is beautiful," he wrote brightly to Lord Melbourne, "and there is room for the overflowing population of all Europe."

He little thought that while he wrote his friends in England were clamouring for his recall. It was a

glorious day in September when the English mails came in, and Lord Durham read to his dismay that the English Government refused to support him in his treatment of the prisoners. He stood alone and shorn of all his authority. His work was in full swing; already the Governors of outlying provinces were in Quebec to attend a Council to consider the union of all Canada under one general Assembly.

A sensitive, proud, nervous man, Lord Durham instantly resolved to resign his post, without even waiting to have his resignation accepted. His pathetic position called forth all the loyalty and devotion of Canada—a very outburst of personal enthusiasm greeted him when the news became known. He had won their confidence, he had upheld the traditions of home, he had saved them from separation or absorption into the United States.

In a broken voice and with tears in his eyes he explained to the colonists the position he now felt to be impossible. For the sake of Canada—our beautiful "Lady of the Snows"—which he so passionately loved, he felt he could no longer stay. He must go home and explain in person the problems which yet remained unsolved. In spite of protest he sailed from Quebec on November 1st—a proud but broken-hearted man.

The first heavy snows of winter had fallen overnight, but this did not deter the loyal Canadians from thronging the silent streets. They filled every window, they stood on the housetops, they pressed respectfully round the carriage that bore their Governor from hill to harbour. As he passed, every hat was raised in silent homage, every eye strained to catch the last sight of the little frigate as she sailed down the St. Lawrence River under the heavy

clouds of snow. As the ship ploughed her way to the great Atlantic the colonists burst into the familiar strains of "Auld Lang Syne," but Lord Durham had left Canada for ever. Nevertheless, it was her welfare that filled his mind on the long, rough voyage home, and he knew that his task was not yet done.

He landed under a cloud of deep disgrace, a mere shadow of the man who had left the shores of England full of bright hopes and prospects but six months before.

But the triumph of his whole career was yet to come. It lay in the famous "Report on the Affairs of British North America" which was laid before Parliament early in the New Year of 1839 and has been recently reprinted. It has been called the "Magna Charta of the Colonies." It broke new ground, it proposed new methods, it was inspired by a new spirit of justice and patriotism, and it opened men's eyes to the possibilities of a Colonial Empire with the Mother Country as a centre. And, coming as it did at the very beginning of the Victorian era, it laid the foundations of our colonial expansion and roused a new spirit of loyalty and devotion for those beyond the sea.

Among other things Lord Durham proposed in this carefully written Report, the union of Upper and Lower Canada, the creation of a self-governing body for internal affairs, State-aided emigration on a large scale, and the formation of a railway for the further development of the country. It was a masterly achievement, born of true statesmanship, though no one realised this at the time. But in the year 1840 a Bill was passed through Parliament uniting the two provinces according to Lord Durham's suggestion.

But by this time the hero of it all lay dying.

Always a delicate man, the treatment he had received had broken his spirit and the disgrace of his recall nearly killed him. Five days after the Queen had given her assent to the Bill, Lord Durham died.

The verdict of history on his great work was slow in coming. "Canada will one day do justice to my memory" he had confidently declared while he lay sick unto death.

That justice came at last. And we realise now that Lord Durham was one of England's strong and wise statesmen, far-seeing if somewhat autocratic, whom we are proud to call our first Imperialist—one of the pioneers of the British Empire.

"The day will come" was his family motto. Surely the day has come at last!

VI

COLONISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA
(1837–1843)

"I hear the tread of pioneers,
Of nations yet to be,
The first low wash of human waves
Where soon shall roll a sea."—WALT WHITMAN.

THE attention of English statesmen had been forcibly drawn to affairs in Canada, but few people in the British Isles took much notice of what their countrymen were doing away in South Africa. Neither were they specially interested in the fact that the beautiful Garden Colony of Natal was being annexed to our other possessions of Cape Colony.

At the Queen's accession our South African possessions were less in area than the British Isles. And though, as we have already seen, England took little part in the life of her colonies at this period, it is extremely important that readers of English history should understand their growth. Each colony has its own definite history, each is built on the courage, industry, and perseverance of fellow-countrymen, each is a thrilling page in the story of our own times.

"Follow after—follow after! We have watered the root,
And the bud has come to blossom that ripens for fruit!
Follow after—we are waiting, by the trails that we lost,
For the sounds of many footsteps, for the tread of a host.
Follow after—follow after—for the harvest is sown;
By the bones about the wayside ye shall come to your own!"

Most of Africa was looked on at this time as a barren desert. Little did men think that the sunburnt plains would one day produce a wealth of copper, that the tracts of sweeping veldt would make the finest pasture in the world, or that the land would yield gold and diamonds unequalled anywhere. There were no large towns in the south, elephants and other big game roamed within a few miles of the coast. Only a few hundred scattered homesteads in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope, occupied by English and Dutch settlers, spoke of the "nation yet to be."

It was not till the year 1820 that a detailed and glowing account of the country reached England from the Governor at the Cape. He spoke of the wondrous beauty of the land, of the forests with their brilliant foliage, of the rich plumage of the birds, of the delicious air laden with the scent of wild flowers, and the fertility of the soil.

So England sent out twenty-three shiploads of colonists to land at Algoa Bay, the next port some 450 miles from Cape Town, to settle in the well-watered land behind the barren sandhills of the low coast. Here gradually arose the towns of Port Elizabeth, Albany, and Grahamstown, later three of the most flourishing towns in the Cape Colony. The hardships and difficulties of these early colonists were great indeed. From time to time whole bands of natives would sweep down and destroy their homes

and their farms, kill their wives and children, steal their sheep and cattle. The native question has ever one of the most difficult in South African colonisation.

Another cause of difficulty lay in the abolition of slavery by English law four years before the Queen's accession, a law which entirely altered the conditions of work in the Cape Colony. There were no less than 39,000 slaves in the employ of English and Dutch colonists at this time. When the order for their freedom went forth, some compensation was given to their employers, but it was badly arranged and many farmers were completely ruined.

The Dutch were specially enraged at this state of things, and resolved to leave the Cape Colony and make their way inland, where they could manage things in their own way. They knew nothing of the "hinterland" to which they were going. Men in search of sport had explored it a little, but no one had thought of living in that vast wilderness which was occupied by savages for the most part, together with wild animals.

But the discontented Dutch farmers—Boers * as they were called—were stout-hearted men; and taking their wives and children, their flocks and herds, they pushed northwards to their new land beyond the Orange River. Near the present town of Bloemfontein they encountered a band of Matabele natives, who massacred large numbers till they were defeated by the Boers and obliged to retreat. Forming a camp near the Vet River they called it Winburg, in memory of their victory. Then they pushed on, and crossed the Drakensberg into Natal. Here they were met by the fierce Zulu tribes, who

* *Bauer* = peasant.

fell on them at the foot of the mountains and murdered no less than forty-one Boers, with their wives and children, at a place afterwards called Weenen, where a marble obelisk was erected later.

Nevertheless by 1838, having defeated the Zulus at Blood River, they began to settle in Natal, building the town of Pieter Maritzburg in memory of their two dead leaders. It was not till they had proclaimed the Republic of Natal, that the English thought it time to interfere.

Long years before English settlers had arrived at Natal; they had laid out the town of Durban two years before the Queen's accession and some English troops had occupied the country since that time. It was a beautiful land, well watered, fresh with breezes from sea and hill, the "Garden Colony" of South Africa.

A few Englishmen awoke to the fact that Natal was slipping away from them, so in 1842 a small force was sent to decide England's claim to it, and English and Dutch colonists came into unfortunate collision.

The little English camp was besieged by 500 Dutch at Durban and their position was one of grave peril; indeed, they would have been forced to surrender had it not been for the daring ride of a young English farmer called Dick King to get reinforcements. Having volunteered for this tremendous ride of 600 miles, the English garrison supplied him with the best horse they had, and under cover of darkness he started on his famous expedition. It was no easy matter to avoid the Dutch scouts posted in the neighbourhood, his track lay through a country of savage natives, where bridges were unknown, and he had to swim the rivers with his horse. At an American mission station on the way he was fed

and rested; but he refused to spare himself, spent as he was, while his countrymen were in peril and distress. So he hastened on, till ten days after he left Durban he staggered into Grahamstown with his woful news. Help was despatched at once to Durban and the Boers were driven off. But the young colonist had accomplished a feat almost without parallel even in the heroic record of colonial history for sheer pluck and endurance. Ever will the "hurrying hoofs of his horse" be heard—

> "Borne on the night-wind of the Past
> Through all our history to the last."

He had practically saved Natal.

On May 10, 1843, Natal was proclaimed a British colony, and grants of land were made to all who wished to make their homes there. A good many Dutch remained, but the majority were not content. Liberal though the grants were, they did not satisfy the "earth-hunger" of these more advanced Boers, who left the country and pushed northwards beyond the Vaal River to an unknown land known later as the Trans-Vaal.

Sixty years ago there was no Transvaal, and to-day there is a colony larger than Great Britain. Here each farmer secured 6,000 acres of virgin soil, which was compensation for having lost the sea coast of fair Natal. They had boundless plains of high plateau, forests of yellow wood and cael thorn, valleys with streams of water and immense quantities of game.

And so we leave the South African colonies for the present. No one dreamed of gold-fields at this time. The Boers led a pastoral life, only disturbed by frequent raids of natives. But, owing to constant

difficulties, in 1852 England, by the Sand River Convention, gave the Boers of the Transvaal the right to manage their own affairs, and two years later another convention was signed at Bloemfontein by which the Boers in the Orange Free State were declared a free and independent people. So we get the birth of the two Dutch Republics—the Transvaal and the Orange Free State—far away inland in British South Africa, which at this time consisted only of Cape Colony and Natal.

Perhaps the name of the Cape was more familiar to English folk at this time than many another possession, for ships still went to India by the long sea route, there being no Suez Canal as yet.

VII

INDIA: THE RETREAT FROM KABUL (1842)

"The snow shall be their winding-sheet."
—CAMPBELL.

IT was by way of the Cape of Good Hope that Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General for India, sailed to take up his new duties. He arrived at Calcutta to hear the details of our terrible retreat from Kabul, with its disastrous loss of life and failure. Difficulties had arisen in Afghanistan, a country lying between Persia and India, governed by a native ruler—Dost Mahommed.

As Persia was under Russian influence and India was under British influence, each country was anxious to secure Dost Mahommed as a friend. But in 1838 England, suspecting Russian influence, sent an expedition, composed of English and native troops, across the Indian frontier to dethrone Dost Mahommed, and crown a friendly Indian Prince in his stead. The expedition was apparently successful, and though Dost Mahommed and his son Akbar Khan, the central figure in this tragic story, made a brave resistance, they fled as the English troops neared Kabul, the capital of their country.

The new ruler was placed on the throne amid

the sullen silence of his new subjects. Then the English, thinking that their task was done, withdrew, leaving some eight thousand men under an English minister, Macnaghten, with Sir Alexander Burnes, to arrange matters at the new Court.

For a time all went well. The English were lulled into a false security by the fact that Dost Mahommed had given up his sword, and surrendered himself to the English. But though the new ruler was weak and unpopular, though signs of discontent were not wanting, "some fatal blindness appears to have suddenly fallen on the eyes of our people in Kabul."

Simmering discontent broke into open rebellion as the autumn of 1841 advanced, and a furious Afghan mob surged round the house of Sir Alexander Burnes, accusing him of treachery and deception. He refused to believe that his life was in danger. He knew himself to be their friend, but they were ignorant, and could not understand. It has always been difficult for Eastern people to understand Western. The wild Afghans drew their knives, slew Alexander Burnes, and hacked him to pieces.

This was the beginning of the end. Akbar Khan, dark, fierce, revengeful, now reappeared on the scene. The Afghans were a treacherous people. They would pretend to be friends, while at heart they were deadly foes; they played a part that no Englishman could understand. Of such was Akbar Khan, but he was a strong leader. He had his country with him, and after several repulses the Indian soldiers, under English officers, began to lose heart. Skirmish after skirmish took place, until Macnaghten was obliged to treat with his foe Akbar. The wily Afghan prince made heavy terms with the English

by which Macnaghten agreed to leave the country at once, and remove the ruler he had so recently enthroned in Afghanistan.

Macnaghten, feeling deeply the disgrace of the terms, delayed the retreat as long as possible, hoping for some reprieve. He was nervous and shaken with recent disasters, and when, after long tarrying, Akbar Khan suggested a conference, to be held on the banks of a river hard by, the English Minister readily agreed. The Englishman and the Afghan prince met on friendly terms, but treachery was at work. Suddenly Akbar Khan drew from his belt a pistol, recently presented by Macnaghten himself, and shot the British Minister through the body, which he then exhibited through the narrow streets of Kabul.

This is a dark page in English history. Terror and weakness seized the little band of English now left in the city. Once more the leaders of the party treated with the treacherous Akbar. They agreed to give up their guns, and leave their treasure on condition that they had provisions and a safe retreat to Jalalabad. One Englishman alone showed that spirit of which England has ever had just cause to be proud. Major Pottinger suggested that in the face of such fearful odds, death were better than such surrender. But this advice was set aside, and the Afghans imposed their own terms on their fallen foes. Akbar Khan promised to protect the English till they reached Jalalabad, which was held by an English garrison. And, strange to say, the English believed in the word of Macnaghten's murderer!

So the terrible retreat began. It was the 6th of January, 1842, the very heart of the Afghan winter. At nine o'clock on that dreary winter morning the

British began their march. There were 4,500 soldiers, under English officers, with their wives and children; there were long trains of camels and camp-followers; sick folk were riding with the most fragile of the women and children—all were unconscious of the terrors before them.

The town of Kabul stands 6,000 feet above sea-level, and snow lay deep on plain and hillside as they left the city. Two days' march over the snow-covered mountains reduced the numbers of the little British band before ever they reached the terrible Khyber Pass, which was to prove the death-trap of so many. This great gorge was five miles long. It was so deep, so precipitous, and so gloomy that the rays of the sun had never pierced it, even in the noonday. Down the deep centre dashed an ice-cold mountain torrent, which the hardest frost failed to freeze.

Weary, frost-bitten, terrified, the reduced little British band straggled into this awful pass, only to be greeted by a storm of rocks and stones hurled down on them by the wild Afghans at every opening. Men, women, children, camels, and horses crowded onwards in a confused mass, only to be killed by falling stones or crushed by frightened animals. Children were torn from the arms of their mothers, and hacked to pieces by the furious Afghans before their very eyes.

And Akbar Khan—he who had promised a safe passage? He was there in person, but unable to stay the fury of his wild subjects, even if he would. He could only suggest that the women and children should be placed under his immediate care. It was their only chance of life, and the retreat went on without them. The snow was now stained with the

blood of those who were left, the air rent with their groans and cries, while the Afghans fought them with their deadly knives. It was a death-trap as fatal as that which had caught the Greeks of old in the Pass of Thermopylæ.

By the time they were within sixteen miles of Jalalabad, only six remained out of the sixteen thousand who had left Kabul but six days before. One by one even these were killed by the blood-thirsty Afghans, until one man alone survived—Dr. Brydon still had strength to sit his weary horse. It was late on the afternoon of January 13th when, bleeding and utterly exhausted, he rode slowly through the Kabul Gate of Jalalabad to tell the story of disaster, of shame and humiliation.

But there were many brave Englishmen in the garrison of Jalalabad, under General Sale, anxious to wipe out the stain on British tradition. When the conditions of surrender imposed by Akbar were repeated at Jalalabad, they were emphatically refused.

"Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post." This was the order of the Englishman commanding the garrison. "I propose to hold this place on the part of the Government until I receive orders to the contrary," he said firmly to his troops.

And he held it. Akbar and his frantic Afghans besieged it in vain. The honour of England was retrieved, and the Afghans fled discomfited.

Meanwhile a Tory Government under Sir Robert Peel had replaced Lord Melbourne's Whig Ministry, and the new policy at home demanded the abandonment of Afghanistan, which accordingly was done, though that country will form another chapter of our history later on.

VIII

ENGLAND'S CHILDREN

"Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
And *that* cannot stop their tears."—MRS. BROWNING.

BUT while a handful of our English men, women, and children were suffering untold agonies in the Khyber Pass away in distant Afghanistan, a great number of England's children were suffering acutely at home. Years before this time Englishmen, in their wisdom and mercy, had decided that forty-five hours a week was long enough for a negro to work, but they did not realise that there were little white slaves in their midst—children of the growing Empire—working sixty-nine hours a week under miserable conditions.

"Climbing boys" are now entirely of the past, but in the early Victorian days the chimneys of England were swept by little children. These children were stripped of their clothes, and forced up narrow, dark chimneys by cruel masters, who but a few years before this time, had been found applying wisps of lighted straw to the children's feet to urge them up. It was terrifying work; sometimes the child died of suffocation from the soot lodged in the

chimney; sometimes terror, bruises, and disease did their work of disabling the child for life. Again and again attention had been drawn to this evil, but it was not till 1840 that an Act was finally passed forbidding children of eight and ten years old to be sent up chimneys.

The sweep with his long brushes took the children's place, but the law was often evaded—as late as 1873 a little chimney-sweeper of seven and a half was suffocated in a flue at Durham—till further legislation wiped this disgrace from our land.

The man who fought the little children's battles in the first half of the century was Lord Ashley (afterwards Lord Shaftesbury). He now turned his attention to the unhappy children working in the factories of England. He found children of four, five, and six years old, ignorant, stunted in growth miserable, working all day long in calico factories, button factories, glass, hosiery, and tobacco factories. Children were looked on as wage-earners, and both parents and factory owners were opposed to shortening the hours of work. It was not till 1845 that England forbade the employment of children under eight years old.

Far worse were the conditions under which children were employed in coal-mines. An inquiry in 1842 resulted in a Report being published. Never was a Blue Book more widely read; it unveiled a state of things that the warmest friends of the poor could not have imagined. Righteous wrath filled the land when it became known that children of four and five toiled all day long below ground in the coal-mines. To a young and nervous child the terror of descending into the dark mine was intense, nor were matters

improved when the lowest depth was reached. Damp, dark, and close, the wall of the mine often had water trickling down its sides, and the ground was deep in black mud.

The first employment of a very young child was that of a "trapper." That is to say, a little five-year-old would sit all day long beside a low door in a dark, narrow passage at the bottom of the mine. On the approach of a small coal-truck pushed by other children—for the most part naked—he must pull open the little door and quickly shut it again. In pitch darkness and intense silence he sat there all day alone, with the rats and beetles which invested some of the mines. If he fell asleep, a strap was applied with brutal severity. As the children grew older they passed to other employments. Along narrow passages they crawled on all fours with girdles round their waists, harnessed by a chain between their legs to the coal-truck they drew; they were just little beasts of burden—different, indeed, to the happy English children attending our schools to-day!

"I found a little girl," said one, reporting on child labour at this time, "six years of age, carrying half a hundred weight [sack] of coals, and making regularly fourteen journeys a day." Each journey she ascended a height exceeding that of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. No wonder many of these children died very early!

"'For oh!' say the children, 'we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.'

* * * * *

But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly!
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free."

The Report of all these infant miseries moved Lord Ashley to bring in his great Bill which forbade mine-owners to employ children under ten years old at all and after that age only within limited hours.

"Is it not enough," he said at the end of a famous speech, "to announce these things to an assembly of Christian and British gentlemen? For twenty millions of money you purchased the liberation of the negro, and it was a blessed deed. You may, this night, by a cheap and harmless vote, invigorate the hearts of thousands of your country people, enable them to walk erect in newness of life and to enter on the enjoyment of their freedom. These, sir, are the ends that I venture to propose: this is the barbarism that I seek to remove."

The Bill was passed and the little children under ten were set free. Inspectors were appointed to attend to these matters.

In 1847 the famous Ten Hours Bill was passed which gave all the working people in the country more freedom to enjoy life, more leisure in their homes, more rest for their bodies.

So a spirit of mercy and pity grew up in England, encouraged and inspired by the young Queen. All through her long reign the conditions of childhood became better and better, till at her death the children of the Empire were happier and healthier than ever before in the whole history of our country.

"To-day we would make free
Our millions of their glorious heritage."

IX

THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER

"When mercy seasons justice."—SHAKSPERE.

NOT only child labour but all English labour was undergoing change during the early years of the Victorian Age. Manual work had been replaced by machinery, and rural and pastoral England had become a manufacturing nation.

Where once stood happy homesteads, surrounded by fresh fields, now tall chimneys blackened the air with their fumes and the flames of blast-furnaces lit up the darkness of the night. The hillsides were disfigured with rubbish-heaps thrown up by human moles at work under ground, while the clear flowing rivers and streams became black and thick with the refuse of factories. Whole new towns had suddenly sprung up, almost like mushrooms in the night. Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Birmingham—all these grew and prospered.

By means of labour-saving machines manufacturers grew rich, but thousands of workers who had supported themselves on home industries were thrown out of work. These poured into the towns, where they lived in unhealthy surroundings, often in underground cellars, herded together in unwholesome

crowds. Wages were kept low by the great competition and the working classes were in a deplorable condition. Agitation was in the air, and this soon took the form of a great political movement known as "Chartism."

Now, just before Queen Victoria's accession the middle classes had been given a vote in the government of England by the passing of the Reform Bill, in 1832. Up to this time the government of the country had been in the hands of the rich landowners. It was but just that the rapidly increasing class of manufacturers should be fairly represented in the House of Commons.

But the Bill, while it gave votes to the middle classes, left the mass of wage-earners and the agricultural population as it found them. In other words, the bulk of the English People had no voice in the legislation of the land.

It was this bulk or huge class of toilers that now arose to assert its manhood and to call attention to an injustice to which it had but newly awakened.

The Chartist movement had its origin in Birmingham, a great centre of industry, as it was of discontent, a fast-growing town with a population at this time little short of Manchester. Here, then, a few weeks after the accession of Queen Victoria, a great meeting was held and a petition was drawn up and read by Daniel O'Connell.

"There is your Charter," he said, when he had read the demands of the working men; "stick to that."

From this time forward for the following ten years those who upheld the petition were called Chartists.

Thousands of ignorant, unhappy men joined the Chartist ranks, and the agitation spread rapidly through the country. Many people joined simply

because they were discontented; they wanted more food and higher wages and shorter hours of work. They felt that the middle classes, with their new-born freedom, were oppressing them; they were a wronged people and must assert themselves boldly. Their charter, after all, was not very alarming nor were their demands excessive. They demanded universal suffrage—that is, a vote for every full-grown man; but it was another thirty years before they got anything like it. They demanded that their voting should be secret, because at present it was known how a man voted, and if he voted against his landlord or employer, he was liable to dismissal. This vote by ballot, or secret voting, was made law in 1872. In addition to this, they demanded the payment of Members, so that poor men could sit in the House. This was not accomplished at the death of Queen Victoria.

As the years passed on, the ranks of the Chartists swelled. They included men of all sorts and conditions: there were clever and able men throwing in their lot with idlers who never did a day's work in their lives; there were crazy fanatics and wild enthusiasts—all agreed in a supreme distrust of the middle classes, who were growing rich on the work of the underpaid toilers. Meetings were held by torchlight in secret and plans made for resort to physical force.

In 1839 Birmingham was the scene of open rebellion, windows were smashed, street lamps broken, houses were burnt, warehouses pillaged. But a more serious riot occurred at Newport, where one of the Chartist leaders had been imprisoned. A number of stalwart Welsh miners arranged to march into Newport two hours after midnight, attack the gaol,

and release them. Armed with swords, pickaxes, and bludgeons, they marched away, some ten thousand strong, and entered the town, five abreast. But the news of their movements had leaked out, and the Mayor stood ready to receive them with soldiers and special constables in the market-place. The rebels called on them to surrender, and a riot ensued, but the Chartists came off badly, and their leaders were tried for high treason.

Still the vague discontent grew, and the Chartist agitation continued. And all the while Carlyle was telling England that over-population was the evil and emigration the cure—emigration to a new world where "Canadian Forests stand unfelled, boundless Plains and Prairies unbroken with the plough . . . green desert spaces never yet made white with corn . . . nine-tenths of it yet vacant, still crying, 'Come and till me, come and reap me.' And all this discontent is in an England with wealth and means for moving such as no nation ever before had, 'with ships, with war-ships rotting idle which might bridge all oceans.'"

But Carlyle's cry and Lord Durham's famous Report on Canada fell on deaf ears, and the Chartists continued their demand for suffrage at home. They carried a monster petition, signed by three million people, to the House of Commons. It was too large to pass through the folding doors of the House, and it was necessary to unroll it and lay it on the floor. It demanded that the Charter should be passed "immediately and without alteration, deduction, or addition." It was impossible, and for the next few years more important events eclipsed the Chartist movement, till in 1848 it burst forth once more.

ST. PANCRAS PUBLIC LIBRARIES

It was the year of the French Revolution. "'Liberty and Property,'" cried Voltaire, "is the cry of England. It is the cry of Nature."

This was true. The foremost idea among the new Chartists, once they had a voice in the government, was to divide the land into small farms and give every man an opportunity of getting his living by the sweat of his brow. They revived the old Charter and secured some five million signatures to a new petition which was to be presented to the House by an Irishman, Fergus O'Connor, on April 10, 1848. The Chartists, some two hundred thousand strong, were to meet at Kennington, cross the River Thames by three bridges, and march in great force to the House of Commons.

But as it had been in the early days at Newport, so now their plans became known and Londoners prepared quietly for their reception. The Duke of Wellington, then Commander-in-Chief, posted unseen troops to command the approaches to the House of Commons. A huge number of special police stood shoulder to shoulder along the streets of London; they were mostly private citizens, united in a common cause. Peers of the realm stood by shopkeepers, the manufacturer beside his workmen, the merchant among his clerks, resolved that grievances should never be redressed by physical force.

A series of accidents befel the Chartists: their leaders became alarmed, numbers never turned up at all, and the procession, that was to overawe London, never started. Finally the famous petition was carried to the House in five cabs and quietly presented. But it turned out to be a fraud. Only two millions of names had been genuine. The others

had merely amused themselves by signing famous names, such as that of the Queen, the Prince Consort, the Duke of Wellington.

Chartism never recovered from this pitiless exposure.

It is difficult to realise in these days the intense anxiety caused by the Chartists during the first ten years of the Queen's reign, for it is almost impossible for us to picture the hard-and-fast line that existed between rich and poor. But the 10th of April was not the death-day of the Chartist cause as they supposed. The monster petitions awakened a new spirit of freedom, founded on a Charter of larger brotherhood. Rich and poor drew closer together, not by law of Parliament, but by mutual trust and sympathy, born of mercy, justice, and understanding.

X

IRELAND AND THE FAMINE

"Down thy valleys, Ireland, Ireland,
Down thy valleys, green and sad."
—Henry Newbolt.

IF the condition of the English labourer was bad, that of the Irishman was worse. The poverty and discontent in the sister island across the Irish Channel were indeed grievous. Statesmen tried in vain to remedy evils which had been growing with the passing centuries and were "the legacy of an unhappy past." The ignorance of the English people was responsible for some of the trouble; they seemed unable to understand the desire of many Irishmen for the recognition of their strong feeling for Nationality.

The leader of these "Nationalists," as they were called later, was, in 1838, a man Daniel O'Connell, who may be called the first Home Ruler for Ireland. A few words will make clear the crisis.

Until the year 1800 Ireland had her own Parliament, sitting in Dublin. It was composed entirely of Protestants and no Roman Catholic was allowed to sit in it. For the past hundred years, Scottish Members had sat in Parliament at Westminster with English Members. At the end of the last

century an Act of Union was passed by which the Irish Members should likewise sit at Westminster, where all the affairs of the United Kingdom could be settled.

On January 1, 1801, the Act came into force. The new Union flag with the harp of Ireland quartered in one corner flew over Dublin Castle, guns fired their salute, bells clanged merrily from church and steeple. But these were outward symbols and did not represent the real feelings of the Irish people. In the ears of Daniel O'Connell the bells sounded harshly.

"I was maddened when I heard the bells of St. Patrick's Cathedral ringing out a joyful peal for Ireland's degradation as if it were a glorious national festival," he cried angrily.

He vowed he would never rest till a law was passed allowing Roman Catholics to sit in the English Parliament. Then he might gain a seat and lift up his voice to secure Home Rule for Ireland, or, as it was called in those days, the Repeal of the Union.

The Bill for Catholic Emancipation was not passed till 1829, but the following year found Daniel O'Connell representing Ireland in the Parliament at Westminster. From this time forward he flung aside his profession and devoted himself to political agitation: "I embraced the cause of my country, and, come weal or woe, I have made a choice which I shall never repent."

O'Connell was fifty-five when he first entered the House of Commons, which had been the ambition of his life. He had set himself a colossal task at which he worked with colossal zeal. He soon made his power felt as an orator of no small ability. Mentally

and physically he was head and shoulders above his fellows, a very giant among lesser men. He was a thorough Celt, passionate and impulsive, with a voice unrivalled for sweetness and strength. He could make his hearers laugh, he could make them cry, he could cause them to thrill with anger. He felt very strongly that the Union had been forced by England on an unwilling people, and pressed on them by a system of bribery, which many regretted but none could deny.

Throughout the early years of Queen Victoria's reign he addressed numerous meetings in Ireland. At last he gathered up his huge strength for the final plunge.

"The year 1843 is and shall be the great Repeal year," he said. "My struggle has begun and I will end it only in death or Repeal." As the summer wore on he summoned one of his monster meetings to the Hill of Tara, the coronation-place of the old Irish kings; the day was a festival of the Roman Church. His call was answered by thousands of devoted Irish.

All the long summer night they gathered on the hillside, and from dawn to noon priests were celebrating Mass under the summer sun to the kneeling crowds. Towards noon, attended by ten thousand horsemen, the Celtic hero arrived. So great and enthusiastic was the crowd, that he was two hours passing the last mile. Standing by the old stone where the last king of Ireland had been crowned, he spoke to the silent throng of possible future glories for Ireland. His voice thrilled them like magic, his words carried conviction to the most ignorant. At the end one arose and gravely crowned O'Connell with the Irish national cap—he should be their

uncrowned king no longer. The enthusiasm was tremendous.

It was the last great meeting. An order came over from England forbidding any more such to be held, and O'Connell refused to resort to force, which was the only alternative. Further, he was charged with conspiracy and sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

When he came out of prison the following year, Ireland was in deep distress, owing to the failure of the potato crop, on which the people recklessly depended for their food. It was, indeed, an overwhelming disaster for Ireland, whose peasants lived upon potatoes only. There was no more thought of repealing the Union now. In the heat of political agitation men had overlooked the social evils growing up in their midst.

"Ireland is in your hands," cried O'Connell to the House of Commons. "If you do not save her, she cannot save herself."

For himself he could do nothing; his day was done. He was an old man and his spirit was broken. The voice that had once thrilled thousands was sunk to a whisper, his head was bowed, his eye was dim. And so he passes from our history to die.

But if the first signs of potato disease had appeared in 1845, far more complete was the destruction of the crop the following year. The fatal blight swept over the land one summer night. Morning found a blackened mass of decay, where but recently whole fields and patches of potato plants had shown promise. Wretched men were seen sitting on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands and wailing bitterly at the plague, that had left them absolutely without food.

Whole generations of Irish in the south and west

had grown up, married, and died without knowing the taste of meat. It was said by Disraeli in 1844 that the Irish were the "worst housed, the worst fed, and the worst clothed of any in Europe. They live in mud cabins littered with straw; their food consists of only dry potatoes, of which they are often obliged to stint themselves to one square meal. Sometimes a herring or a little milk may afford them a pleasing variety, but sometimes also they are driven to seaweed and wild herbs. Dwelling in hovels and feeding upon roots, they are also clothed in rags."

It was on such a poverty-stricken race that famine now strode pitilessly, such a famine as had not been known in the British Isles since the fifteenth century. In some parts one-tenth of the population died before help could be obtained.

Men were to be seen wandering about, searching for stray turnips, for watercress, for anything to stay their terrible hunger. Whole families perished, women and children just lay down in their cabins and died of sheer starvation. The streets were crowded with country peasants, gaunt and hopeless, wandering to and fro; starving, half-clad women clamoured for soup tickets. All the sheep had been killed, all the poultry, all the pigs; the very dogs had been slain to feed the hungry multitude.

Not only England but all Europe and America heard the bitter cry of the famished Irish. Large sums of money were sent from the English Treasury, stores of Indian corn were shipped into the country, relief works were set on foot, and "famine roads" may be seen all over the country to-day. English gold was poured into the country and for a time three million people were fed daily. "It was the

grandest attempt ever made to grapple with famine over a whole country, to which neither ancient nor modern history can furnish a parallel."

Still, the deaths sometimes numbered one hundred a day, and when the days grew brighter and the famine ceased, it was found that out of a population of ten millions, only eight millions were left.

Hundreds and thousands emigrated to America, where they made fresh homes in that land of plenty, and the wholesale exodus which began at this time has thinned the Irish at home till to-day there are but half the number there were at the accession of the Queen.

The legislation that followed the famine in Ireland was disastrous ; it raised a very storm of opposition and passionate bitterness which the long years of Victoria's reign have failed to heal. But—

> "Now the dawn is breaking
> Through the long night, through Ireland's night of tears,
> New songs wake in the morn of her awaking
> From the enchantment of nine hundred years."

XI

FREE TRADE

"At certain periods in the history of a nation it becomes necessary to review its principles of domestic policy, and to adapt ourselves to its changing."—R. Cobden.

THE Irish famine strengthened the hands of the Free Trade party in England. To understand how this came about, it will be well to glance for a moment at the condition of our commerce at this time.

Few movements in our modern history have been more hotly discussed than that of Free Trade. When Queen Victoria came to the throne some twelve hundred articles coming into England were taxed more or less heavily. That is to say, England, like every other nation, protected her commerce. This encouraged English people to buy English goods in preference to foreign goods, and English farmers to grow English corn, which could be bought cheaper than foreign corn with its heavy tax.

But the population of the British Isles was growing rapidly in the great manufacturing districts of the north, where child labour was in great request. Every little child was an additional source of wealth to the toiling poor, for it could add its small pittance to the weekly wage by turning wheels in the ever

increasing factories. Up to this time it had been possible to grow enough corn in England to supply the wants of all our people, but now there were many extra mouths to feed and there was not enough bread for all.

It was in the fast-growing city of Manchester, where men fought for bread, where women sold their wedding rings to get food for the starving children, that the idea of repealing the Corn Laws was forced upon a little band of thinking men.

Foremost among those Lancashire men who wished for Free Trade by the repeal of the Corn Laws were two whose names will ever stand out in our country's history—Richard Cobden and John Bright. There is nothing more attractive in the whole history of the Corn Laws than the close bond of brotherhood which existed between these two apostles of Free Trade.

Having convinced themselves that nothing else would bring prosperity to their country, they set nobly and bravely to work, never sparing themselves, never resting till their object was attained.

It was in 1841 that Richard Cobden first called on John Bright. The two men had already met in Manchester. Now Bright was in grievous trouble, for his young wife had just died. Cobden came to offer his deepest sympathy. Suddenly he looked hard at the stricken man before him. "There are thousands and thousands of homes," he said, "where wives and mothers and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first agony of your grief is passed I would advise you to come with me and we will never rest until the Corn Laws are repealed."

This cemented the friendship of the "David and Jonathan" of the Anti-Corn Law League, and for

five years, the two men worked in perfect harmony. They were eager to lift the whole question above the strife of party.

"I am neither Whig nor Tory," cried Cobden in 1841; "I am a Free Trader." But Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, who had succeeded Lord Melbourne, was pledged to Protection—that is, to keep some tax on foreign corn—and he was slow to come round to the new idea of Free Trade, lest the farmers of England should be ruined.

Still, Cobden and Bright never gave up. They went about the country speaking to vast masses of people, they pleaded with working men, they travelled the length and breadth of the land to explain the idea of Free Trade. Though they were naturally opposed by the large land-owners and farmers, more and more people joined the League and the agitation grew with amazing vigour.

Still, the Prime Minister held to his idea of protecting English-grown corn, for the sake of English agriculture, till at last his hand was forced.

When, in 1845, the Irish potato crop partially failed a great cry rang through the land for free corn. It was echoed in England by the Anti-Corn Law League, and Cobden and Bright renewed their efforts to convince the people of the real necessity of taking this step. "Famine itself, against which we warred, had joined us," said Bright long years later.

The months passed on and still a tax of 18s. a quarter lay on the importation of foreign corn, which supplied the people with bread. At last matters reached a crisis. The New Year of 1846 dawned, and with it came a rumour that the Prime Minister intended to repeal the Corn Laws. On January 22nd the House met—the Queen opened it

in person. The Speech from the Throne suggested change. Soon after Peel announced his conversion. He was convinced that the time had come to abandon Protection; the Manchester school of Free Traders were right. There were too many starving people in the British Isles; the food supply from within had failed them, hence the supply must come from without.

Peel the Protectionist had become Peel the Free Trader.

But there was one man listening to him who was not converted so easily, who did not agree with Cobden and Bright that Free Trade was the only remedy for the present discontent.

Young Benjamin Disraeli had sat in the House of Commons for the past ten years. He had changed his opinions since his election in 1837. He was now, in the new language of the day, a Conservative. His maiden speech, made in the year of the Queen's accession, had been received with laughter and contempt, but as he sat down he had shouted these prophetic words: "Ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me." His dramatic manner, his wild gestures, his exaggerated dress, all helped to make him ridiculous. He had a long, pale face and black eyes, his coal-black hair fell in bunches of "well-oiled ringlets over his left cheek." His favourite dress consisted of a bottle-green frock-coat and waistcoat, a black tie with no collar, and large fancy trousers. Such a grotesque figure could not command respect, and so far his political career had failed.

Now his time had come, and he showed the "genius of the born leader by stepping forth at the critical moment and giving the word of command."

From this time, when he upheld the principles of Protection against Free Trade, his career became famous.

He urged that such a measure must ruin agriculture. And yet "you have declared," he cried to a crowded House—"you have declared that if there were not an acre of land cultivated in England it would not be the worse for this country. You have all of you in open chorus announced your object to make this country the workshop of the world. Your system and ours are exactly contrary. You prefer to remain in isolated splendour and solitary magnificence."

He acknowledged the possibility of temporary triumph. "For a moment your ports may be filled with shipping, your factories smoke on every plain, your forges flame in every city. . . . But the dark and inevitable hour will arrive . . . there will be an awakening of bitterness. . . . Then when the spirit is softened by misfortune, men will recur to those principles which made England great and which in our belief alone can keep England great." Notwithstanding Disraeli's vehement protest, Free Trade won the day, and the summer of 1846 found the Corn Laws repealed.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" wrote Cobden, "the Corn Bill is law, and now my work is done."

It was followed by the repeal of many other taxes, until at the death of the Queen only twenty articles out of the twelve hundred were taxed, and they were for the most part luxuries, such as wine, spirits, tobacco, &c.

One more important point must be recorded before this chapter closes. The advocates of Free Trade made no doubt that if England once opened her doors to foreign goods free of tax, other nations

would immediately follow and we should have an ideal world of Free Trade.

"It is because Great Britain is so strong in resources, in courage, in institutions, in geographical position, that she can before all other European Powers afford to be moral, and to set the example of a mighty nation walking in paths of justice and peace," Cobden had affirmed.

But no other nation followed England's lead. Most other nations in the world continued to protect their home trade and taxed articles from other countries, leaving England "in isolated splendour and solitary magnificence."

XII

EMIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA
(1850)

"A race high-handed, strong of heart,
Sea-rovers, conquerors, builders in the waste."
—NEWBOLT.

SINCE those days when Free Trade seemed the only hope of saving the English people from starvation much has happened. But in the great Free Trade scheme the Colonies were treated as foreign countries; connection with the Mother Country was not referred to. Nevertheless, Australia was growing rapidly in size and importance. At the Queen's accession vast tracts of country were yet unexplored and only a handful of English lived in the scattered homesteads. Though the whole island-continent was twenty-five times the size of the British Isles, her white population in 1837 only numbered one-fourth of the people in the town of Sydney at the Queen's death.

The early colonisation in this far-off land is painful reading, for it was largely peopled by convicts and prisoners sent out from England, when the United States no longer afforded a place for transportation.

The first party of settlers, after a terrible voyage of eight months from England, had landed at Port

Jackson in 1788, "where their eyes were gladdened by the sight of a magnificent harbour," now the pride of the citizens of Sydney. By the time of the Queen's accession Sydney was a well-planned town with paved streets and fair-sized houses, a church and a hospital. It became the centre of that eastern part known as New South Wales, a large, boundless tract of country growing day by day.

Englishmen of daring and high courage had made their way to right and left, north and south and west of Sydney, ever opening up new fields for enterprise. The famous Blue Mountains had been crossed by three intrepid explorers and a road had been skilfully constructed to the rich plains beyond, where a little settlement called Bathurst had been made. So rapid was the growth of New South Wales that in 1843 the people had begged the Mother Country to grant them a Constitution of their own. A Governor was sent from England and a Legislative Council was formed to represent the wishes of the colonists.

Already a small band of emigrants had landed on the coast of West Australia, at the mouth of the Swan River, which was so called from the number of black swans that swam about on its surface. Under Captain Fremantle this little colony started life. But the port which they named after their leader was exposed to the storms of the open ocean, and the colonists were driven farther up the river, where they began to build the now flourishing town of Perth.

But the colony grew slowly, for the distances were vast and the district was entirely cut off from the rest of the island continent. Indeed, at one time the prospects seemed so gloomy that there was a serious idea of abandoning it altogether, but in

course of time, by the aid of convict labour, roads were made and a settlement formed at Albany, at the head of King George's Sound.

Still the colonists in Western Australia were separated from those in South Australia by a tract of waterless desert, which no man had attempted to cross, till in 1840 Eyre courageously crossed it from east to west. He was already the hero of several adventures and expeditions. He had driven cattle through unknown country from Sydney to Adelaide, a journey which had taken eight months to perform, and he had opened up a trade route between the two towns. He had journeyed inland from Adelaide to Perth.

Now he formed the daring plan of establishing a trade route, if possible, across the desert, near the shores of the great Australian Bight. Along the southern coast of 1,500 miles no river or stream flowed into the great Bight; its inhospitable shores were bounded by low, rocky cliffs. Across this thousand miles of barren waste this one man, with two companions and a black man, packhorses, food, and six sheep, started with that buoyant hope which makes all things possible to the explorer.

It was indeed—

> —"a waste land, where no one comes,
> Or hath come, since the making of the world."

Often he had to go for five days without a drop of fresh water. He toiled on over the summit of high, unbroken cliffs, at the foot of which broke a sailless sea, blown by furious winds rushing up from the Antarctic ice. Horse after horse dropped dead in the sand from waterless misery, the black men complained bitterly and deserted more than once; Eyre's

courage alone kept the party going. Half-way across his companions were slain by natives, and alone with his black man, Wylie, five hundred miles from home, five hundred more from his goal, he dragged on his weary way. He was more dead than alive when at last he staggered into the little English settlement of Albany, his great journey accomplished.

Such were the men who opened up the great Australian continent, Englishmen whose cool courage and splendid daring have won for the Mother Country her great colonies.

The settlers were entirely occupied in sheep farming, and it was by exporting wool that the colonies throve at this time. The towns grew slowly, for the colonists were ever moving farther and farther into regions unwatered, unexplored, and unfenced. They became "squatters"—that is to say, they used the land without possessing it.

By the year 1848 there were six colonies in Australia—New South Wales, including Victoria and Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land), and South Australia. Colonists in these new districts now began to demand a Constitution, similar to that granted already to New South Wales. But the Mother Country had been occupied with her own affairs, and she put aside the claims of her children far away in Australia, till their cries became more and more persistent.

Fortunately for England, Lord John Russell was Prime Minister at this time: he was one of the few statesmen who saw the value of the colonies and the vast importance of giving them self-government in all their local affairs, while still maintaining the Imperial connection. In the course of a remarkable speech (1850), reviewing the progress of the British

colonies, he pointed out the result of neglecting the demands of our brothers in Australia :—

"I consider it to be our bounden duty to maintain the colonies, which have been placed under our own charge. We cannot get rid of the obligation and responsibility to govern these colonies for their benefit. . . . The value of our commerce, which penetrates to every part of the globe, all will admit; and many of those colonies give harbours and security to that trade which are most useful in time of war. . . . If our colonies were abandoned by Great Britain, they would most naturally and justly apply to some other country for protection; they would say, 'We have been abandoned by those to whom we are bound by allegiance, protection is now taken from us, and we ask you to become our protectors and receive our allegiance.' Who can doubt that other countries would readily afford the protection so asked?"

These words rang true to British ears. A Legislative Council was authorised for each Australian colony, with power to impose and levy duties of customs on any imported goods, wares or merchandise.

XIII

COLONISTS IN NEW ZEALAND

"All the past we leave behind,
* * * * *
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labour and the march,
Pioneers! O Pioneers!"—WALT WHITMAN.

THE islands of New Zealand, some thousand miles to the south-east of Australia, had already had a Constitution, but this had been suspended by the Governor, Sir George Grey, on account of the native question. Let us see the cause of this.

The three islands of New Zealand together were somewhat smaller than the British Isles. They were taken possession of separately by Captain Cook in 1770, when the country was entirely in the hands of the native Maoris, who had possessed the land for many hundred years before this. These Maoris had refused to make friends with the English explorer; but when the settlers from New South Wales sailed across on whaling expeditions, the Maoris were glad to supply them with pork and potatoes in exchange for knives and blankets. Still, they were treacherous friends, and the news that they had killed and eaten

everybody on board a ship wrecked off their coast was not very encouraging to English settlers.

As so often happens in our colonial history, it was a little band of missionaries that first led the way for English settlers to come after.

Marsden, known as the Apostle of New Zealand, was the pioneer. He and his little band settled among the savage Maoris in 1814 with a view to teaching and civilising them. They bought two hundred acres for twelve axes and built themselves huts on the shores of the Bay of Islands on the North Island.

Had these been the only Englishmen dealing with the Maoris, all would have gone well; but whaling ships, often manned by convicts from New South Wales, were constantly landing; quarrels, petty thefts, and murders took place, and various tribes took to fighting among themselves. The introduction of firearms disturbed the peace of the Maoris.

One of their chiefs went to England with one of the missionaries. There he was laden with presents, all of which he secretly sold for three hundred muskets and gunpowder. Returning to New Zealand with these, he announced, "There is but one king in England, there shall be but one among the Maoris."

So saying, he armed his warriors and soon the whole North Island was obliged to own his sway. He eagerly welcomed white men and gave them land in return for weapons.

When Queen Victoria came to the throne there were some five hundred Europeans on the coast, living wild and lawless lives that even the missionaries were unable to control. Such terrible accounts reached England that a New Zealand Company was

formed, and Captain Hobson with a party of colonists sailed out to proclaim the country henceforth as a part of the British Empire.

In 1840 a famous gathering took place on the shore of the Bay of Islands, near the mouth of the river Waitangi. The new Governor, who was to be under the Governor of New South Wales, sat on a chair of state, his officers in uniform, the missionaries, sailors, and leading white men standing around. The Maoris had gathered in force to hear the proclamation, which they hoped would bring peace to their land. By this Treaty of Waitangi they were called on to acknowledge Victoria as their sovereign Queen, who promised protection and just dealings with her white subjects in New Zealand. The treaty was signed by five hundred native chiefs, and New Zealand was declared to be part of the Empire.

A site for the capital was found at Auckland, emigrants flocked over from Sydney and many hundreds came out from England. Many of these started a settlement at Port Nicholson, which they named Wellington after the famous Iron Duke. They worked with a will at their new homes, for the soil was rich and deep, the scenery was beautiful, and they had visions of peace and plenty. No difficulty was experienced with regard to the land at this time; the Maoris were content to sell a large tract for 339 muskets, 300 blankets, 160 axes, 276 shirts, added to a collection of kettles, cartridges, gunpowder, and tobacco. Before long some four thousand people were happily settled at Wellington, while Auckland had three thousand, and a new settlement was starting opposite Wellington, on the north of the South Island, called Nelson.

So far the Maoris had been friendly, but a dispute arose about some land along the banks of the River Wairau. The English understood they had bought it and sent surveyors to report on it; the Maoris declared it was not included in the bargain. By way of protest they burnt down the surveyors' huts. The settlers from Nelson were indignant, and some forty of them, armed, arranged to meet the Maori chiefs to decide their rights. The two chiefs, very giants in stature, with a hundred warriors behind them, stood firm, and only repeated that the land in question was theirs. Then the English produced handcuffs, but the chiefs refused to be bound.

"Englishmen, forward!" cried the leader of the settlers.

It was an unwise order. A shot was fired and a woman was killed. She was the wife of one chief and daughter of the other. Angrily the Maoris fired back, and a conflict began in which twenty-two white men were slain.

This Wairau massacre, as it was called, created something of a panic among the settlers at Wellington and Nelson. A general feeling of unrest was abroad, which was not improved when a young Maori cut down the English flagstaff at Auckland, though it was guarded by a score of English soldiers.

The first Maori war definitely broke out in 1845 and help was sent over from Sydney. After several skirmishes, a strong contingent of English soldiers with six cannon attacked the Maoris in their stronghold and defeated them with considerable loss. It was a happy day for the disturbed colonists of New Zealand when a young English officer, George Grey, arrived from South Australia, where he had been Governor, to take over the government of

New Zealand. Everything was in confusion, there were misunderstandings and open quarrels over the land. The Maoris were convinced that the English meant to deprive them of all their ancestral lands, and it was no easy matter to allay their fears.

The new Governor assured them that for the future their land would only be bought at a fair price should they wish to sell it, and not, as heretofore, purchased for a few firearms. As soon as possible he brought the war to a triumphant end, and just terms of peace were concluded.

The Maoris soon felt that the hand of a strong ruler was over them, but that their Governor was also their faithful friend. For the first time the colony felt the blessing of peace; churches and schools arose in the towns, agriculture was encouraged, and settlers came out from England in ever-increasing quantities.

Not only from England, but Scotland sent out a large party of colonists, who founded the town of Dunedin (Gaelic for Edinburgh). Another band of colonists was formed to found a church colony. These chose a lovely site on the River Avon and they called their new home Christchurch.

So "Governor Grey," as he was called by the people, guided the infant colony of New Zealand into peaceful waters. Together with Bishop Selwyn he worked among the Maoris as well as among the English settlers, preaching harmony and justice. And the Maoris grew to love him, so that when the time came for him to leave, a great wail of lamentation arose from end to end of the two islands. Perhaps the famous address presented to him by the Maori chiefs best sums up what he did for New Zealand.

"This is our farewell address to you, O friend Governor Grey: The chiefs and people of New Zealand let you go forth bearing their love. Suppose not, O Governor, that this affection for you is merely an outside thing. No! it comes from the inward recesses of the heart. We hoped that your heart would rest here with us. Now hearken! When the missionaries first came to this land there was little industry, and little good was visible, but there was much indolence and much wickedness and all lived in ignorance. Then God kindled His light and lo! it became as day.

"After this came Governor Hobson, and then a little fear came over us. But when you came, O Governor Grey, it was like the shock of an earthquake; your fame rose to the centre of the island and extended to the waves on the ocean's shores. You came with two lights—the lamp of God and the word of the Queen of the British Empire. You have encouraged industry in the cultivation of the soil, pointed out the means of acquiring property, and raised this island to its present state of prosperity. You have taught us to shun evil, you have been as one of the ministers of the Churches, therefore we call you by these names: the Peacemaker, the Friendly One, the Loving One, the Director, the Protector, the Far-Famed One, the Lifter-up, the Father.

"Go, then, thou great one, the pride of the people. On the day that the great one shall depart let him be escorted by the tribes and let his attendants bear him along to the tides of the ocean and, Father, return, return to us."

XIV

THE GREAT EXHIBITION
(1851)

"Swell, organ, swell your trumpet blast!
March, Queen and royal pageant, march
By splendid aisle and springing arch
Of this fair hall.

And see, above the fabric vast
God's boundless heaven is bending blue,
God's peaceful sunlight's beaming through
And shines o'er all."—THACKERAY.

A GREAT chance for the people at home to see what the colonies could produce came in 1851, when the Great Exhibition of foreign and colonial produce was held.

As the summer of 1851 drew on, all eyes were turned towards Hyde Park, London, where, for some months past, a huge glass palace had been in course of erection. The idea of displaying here all the industries of the whole world had occurred to the Prince Consort, who had announced his scheme to the people of England in these words: "Gentlemen, the Exhibition of 1851 is to give the world a true test and a living picture of the point of industrial development at which the whole of mankind has arrived in this great task, and a new starting-point

from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions."

Indeed, it was the first attempt ever made to collect men from every country in Europe, America, Africa, and Australia, in a common bond of interest and sympathy. But the Prince himself had yet larger ideas behind all this. He wanted to see a world at peace. He had visions of a time when "the war drum throbb'd no longer and the battle flags were furl'd," a time when each man should find his own in all men's good,

> "And all men work in noble brotherhood."

He thought that, once men of all nations and creeds had met on a friendly footing, they would never wish to meet again in the fierce rivalry of war. But this was not to be. The great Peace Festival was a grand success, as far as it went; but in less than three years Russians, Turks, English, and French were all at war away in the distant Crimea.

The organisation of the Exhibition was truly a vast undertaking and immense opposition had to be overcome. The idea of building in glass and iron instead of brick originated with the Duke of Devonshire's gardener, Joseph Paxton, to whom was entrusted the erection. When finished it looked something like a cathedral; it was four times the length of St. Paul's and twice the width, covering eighteen acres of Hyde Park. It rose like magic; begun in September, 1850, it was completed by January 1, 1851.

> "A quiet green but few days since,
> With cattle browsing in the shade,
> And here are lines of bright arcade
> In order raised."

After four months of hard work arranging the exhibits, it was opened in person by Queen Victoria, together with the Prince Consort and their two eldest children, the Princess Royal, afterwards Empress of Germany, and the Prince of Wales, afterwards King of England. Perhaps the Queen's own words best describe the scene on the opening day.

"The great event has taken place," she says, "a complete and beautiful triumph — a glorious and touching sight, one which I shall ever be proud of for my beloved Albert and my country. Hyde Park was one densely-crowded mass of human beings, in the highest good-humour and most enthusiastic. A little rain fell just as we started; but before we came near the Crystal Palace the sun shone and gleamed upon the gigantic edifice, upon which the flags of all Nations were floating.

"We drove up Rotten Row and got out at the entrance on that side. The glimpse of the transept through the iron gate, of the waving palms, flowers, statues, myriads of people filling the galleries and seats all round, and the flourish of trumpets as we entered, gave us a sensation which I can never forget, and I felt much moved. . . . The sight, as we came to the middle, where the steps and chair were placed with the beautiful crystal fountain just in front of it, was magical—so vast, so glorious, so touching. . . .

"The tremendous cheers, the joy expressed in every face, the immensity of the building, the mixture of the palms, flowers, trees, statues, fountains, the organ (with two hundred instruments and six hundred voices), and my beloved husband the author of this 'Peace Festival' which united the industry of all nations of the earth—all this was moving indeed; it

was and is a day to live for ever. God bless my dearest Albert, God bless my dearest country, which has shown itself so great to-day! Albert left my side after 'God save the Queen' had been sung, after which the Archbishop of Canterbury offered up a short prayer, followed by the 'Hallelujah Chorus.'"

During this a Chinese, with a tail of fabulous length, evidently touched by the solemn scene, made his way slowly round the great fountain to the Queen and made her a deep bow. Then a procession was formed, in which the old Duke of Wellington (it was his eighty-second birthday) joined, and the Royal party walked from end to end of the Exhibition, amid continued cheering and waving of handkerchiefs.

Every language in the world might have been heard within this vast concourse; not a few Frenchmen shouted "Vive la reine!" while throngs of Germans saluted Britain's Queen.

> "The people hum from floor to roof
> With Babel tongue."

And amid the turbans, fez, and sallow Indian faces might be seen the British workman in round fustian jacket and glazed cap of those early days.

And what did all these thousands of people look at as they wandered up and down these vast aisles?

The west half of the long building was occupied by products of Great Britain and her "Dependencies" arranged in thirty classes, each marked by a red banner; the eastern half was given up to foreign countries. Out of the fifteen thousand exhibits, one-half were British. Right down the centre were fountains, marble statues, models of bridges, light-

houses, and telescopes, &c. In the centre of all stood the marvellous crystal glass fountain already mentioned by the Queen. This represented the equator of the world, and round it were grouped the products of India, China, Tunis, Turkey, Persia, Egypt, and Arabia as about the torrid zone. An endless scene of beauty and interest met the bewildered spectator. There were articles of untold wealth to be seen: there were golden embroideries from the gorgeous East, glittering jewels, pure white marble sculpture, rich carpets, and many-coloured silks; there were specimens of native work from far-off lands, wheat and grain, implements of agriculture, carriages, manufactured articles—indeed, there was something to suit every taste.

Let us hear Thackeray's Irishman who visited the Crystal Palace soon after it was opened:—

"There's cabs on stands
And shandthrydanns,
There's wagons from New York here;
There's Lapland sleighs
Have cross'd the seas,
And jaunting cars from Cork here.

Look, here's a fan
From far Japan,
A sabre from Damasco;
There's shawls ye get
From far Thibet,
And cotton prints from Glasgow.

There's granite flints
That's quite immense,
There's sacks of coals and fuels,
There's swords and guns,
And soap in tuns,
And gingerbread and jewels."

So great was the interest that over four thousand persons visited the Exhibition daily for the six months it remained open. It was the first of its kind, but by no means the last. In the words of one who was present, "The exhibition in Hyde Park still has its place in the memory—not for what it brought about or accomplished, but simply for itself, its surroundings, and its house of glass." That house of glass was removed to Sydenham, whither men from all the nations of the world still flock to-day to see the collections and treasures on view at the world-famed Crystal Palace.

XV

ALFRED TENNYSON—POET LAUREATE (1850)

"As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher."—TENNYSON.

NO one in all England had been more enthusiastic over the Great Exhibition than Alfred Tennyson. When Wordsworth died, at the age of 80, in the spring of 1850, the honour of being Poet Laureate, declined by the poet Rogers on account of his great age, was offered to a young man, Alfred Tennyson.

His fame as a poet had already spread through the land. As a child of five he had made his first line of poetry. In the garden of the old Lincolnshire rectory, where he was born, the wind came one day sweeping down from the hills. Alfred Tennyson, then a little boy with shining hair and deep-set eyes, spread open his two sturdy arms to the blast, letting himself be blown along, and as he tossed his arms and the gust whirled him onwards, he cried: "I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind."

Many and many a voice has spoken to him since those early days, and he has given to the world in very perfect form his beautiful thoughts and inspirations. From the shades of old forests, by far-off

shores, from some shrine where the faithful knight renews his vows, from the "moated grange" and Locksley Hall comes the voice of Tennyson—"rich, dreamy, passionate . . . musical with the airs of chivalrous ages, yet mingling in his song the spirit of those that are yet to come."

It has been said that one must be English born to realise the spell cast by this great enchanter, who never wearies of describing the home life of England at its sweetest and its best. He loved his own country, he was a patriot to his heart's core, and his national poems are truly inspiring.

"What England was, shall her true sons forget?"

he cried, when disaster seemed to threaten the country, while his famous lines addressed to Canada breathed enthusiasm:—

"Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee most, we love thee best,
For art not thou of British blood?"

He realised in England a mother of nations:—

"Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
* * * * *
Who sprang from English blood."

He recognised the great freedom of England:—

"It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will;
A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent."

Bursting into the well-known lines:—

> "Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
> From out the storied Past, and used
> Within the Present, but transfused
> Thro' future time by power of thought."

His high ideal of English character was called forth by the death of the Duke of Wellington (1852). He loved to dwell on this "last great Englishman," "great in council and great in war"—"foremost captain of his time"—"in his simplicity sublime":—

> "For this is England's greatest son,
> He that gained a hundred fights
> Nor ever lost an English gun."

Fine as a soldier, he described the Duke as even finer as a man. He was one "who never sold the truth to serve the hour, nor palter'd with Eternal God for power . . . whose life was work . . . who never spoke against a foe," one "who cares not to be great but as he saves or serves the State":—

> "Such was he: his work is done.
> But while the races of mankind endure,
> Let his great example stand
> Colossal, seen of every land,
> And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
> Till in all lands and thro' all human story
> The path of duty be the way to glory."

But it was the publication in 1850 of his passionate lament for his friend Arthur Hallam, "In Memoriam," that won for him the Laureateship. This was a long poem of tender lyrics and stored-up memories of his dead friend; lovingly he dwelt on the days when they were boys together and "glad

at heart from May to May." But this beloved friend died at the early age of twenty-three, abroad, leaving the poet Tennyson broken-hearted. The rest of the poem was a "song of woe," only to be understood by those, who have cared for their friends as Tennyson cared.

It was said that the Prince Consort* loved "In Memoriam." Certain it is that Tennyson understood and respected the character of the Prince, for he dedicated to him his wonderful "Idylls of the King":—

"These to his memory*—since he held them dear
* * * * *
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears
These Idylls.
And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my king's ideal knight,
Who reverenced his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;
* * * * *
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed,
Beyond all title and a household name,
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good."

It is difficult to know what lines to quote in order to show the beauty of this long poem of King Arthur, his knights, and the Round Table. The story was taken from an old legend of Saxon days, but the lesson of chivalry is the same for all times. Tennyson described the band of brave knights formed by King Arthur to help him in his work, to break the heathen and uphold the Christ, to ride abroad, "redressing human wrong":—

"A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world."

* Prince Consort died 1861. See Chapter XXVI.

Such was the high spirit displayed by Alfred Tennyson for his country and his Queen. His poems have helped many a man and woman to play their part during the long Victorian era, and they will stimulate many another in the ages that are yet to come.

XVI

WRITERS OF FICTION

(*Dickens*, 1812–70; *Thackeray*, 1811–1863)

"Beyond the fear of forgetfulness or change."—Dr. J. Brown.

FRIENDS and contemporaries of the Poet Laureate were the two famous story-tellers of the Victorian Age, Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray. Dickens sprang into fame the very year of the Queen's accession with his now famous "Pickwick Papers." His early struggles are familiar to all readers of "David Copperfield," published in 1849, in which his father, too, has a place under cover of Mr. Micawber in the debtors' prison, where little Charles used to visit him every Sunday. During the week the child—then but ten years old—walked his four miles daily to a blacking factory, where he spent the whole day sticking labels on to bottles, till better times dawned, his father got some work and was able to give his children some schooling.

Charles Dickens, while still quite young, took to writing, and before long he got regular work on the staff of a newspaper. He was but poorly educated, but he managed to learn shorthand and to read a

good deal at the British Museum, open then, as now, to all. He wrote little papers and sketches as well, but nothing had as yet appeared in print independently.

One twilight evening, he stealthily dropped his first paper into a "dark letter box, in a dark office, up a dark court in Fleet Street." The sketch was accepted, and "appeared in the full glory of print" in a magazine, and so overcome with joy was the young author that he had to step into Westminster Hall to hide the tears of joy that would come into his eyes. He had signed his sketch "Boz," the pet name of a younger brother. These "Sketches by Boz" soon arrested attention. "The Pickwick Papers" followed, and at the age of twenty-four, Charles Dickens "awoke and found himself famous." Every one was reading his book, every one was talking about it, every one was laughing over it.

It was a slack time in England for prose literature. Scott had been dead for five years; Carlyle's name was known only to the few; Macaulay was in India; Charles Kingsley, the same age as the young Queen, published nothing till 1850; Ruskin was yet unknown.

During the early years of the Queen's reign "Pickwick" was the most popular book in England. It was followed by "Oliver Twist" in 1838 and "Nicholas Nickleby" the following year, while "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Martin Chuzzlewit" followed later. During the Crimean War, Dickens was at work on "Hard Times" and "Little Dorrit." He toiled ceaselessly for fifty-eight years, and when, in 1870, he died his "brain was still vigorous, his eye as keen, and his hand as sure" as in the first

freshness of youth. They laid him in Westminster Abbey "among the men who have most helped by deed and thought to make this England of ours what it is."

Not only was he the most popular novelist of his time, he was also a writer whose like we shall not see again. Familiar with the manners and customs of the early Victorian days, he has drawn for us the life of the London streets, he has shown us the merchant of those days, the shopkeeper, the clerk, lawyer, schoolmaster. He has described streets, prisons, schools long since vanished. With a master hand he has drawn the sufferings and humours of the London poor; he has written of their kindness, their silent patience under hardship and poverty, the tenderness that lies under many a rough exterior; he has aroused interest in the lot of the workhouse inmate, and drawn pathetic pictures of neglected children in the great cities.

We read of Oliver Twist, the little pauper child who wins his way, pure and undefiled, through surrounding evil; and of Little Nell ministering to her old grandfather. He reminds us that in the worst of mankind there is something of good worth reclaiming. His writing is full of quaint exaggerations; he can make us laugh and cry at will, but in his laughter, as in his tears, there is ever the kindly heart and the great human love which keep his message fresh for all time.

The genius of Thackeray was of slower development. The two writers were born within a year of each other, but Thackeray did not make his mark till eleven years after the Queen's accession, and died seven years before Dickens. While "Pickwick" and "Oliver Twist" were being widely read, not only

in England, but in the colonies too, the name of Thackeray was known only to a small circle.

Thackeray was born in India, where many of his ancestors had lived and died. At the age of five he came to England, fatherless. He was educated at Charterhouse and Cambridge, where he first met Alfred Tennyson, who became his lifelong friend. He developed a taste for drawing, and for a short time studied art in Paris, and when, in 1835, he first met Charles Dickens it was suggested that he should illustrate "Pickwick." Thackeray started life with plenty of money, but he lost it all in journalistic enterprise. He now became a regular contributor to *Fraser's Magazine*, he reviewed Carlyle's "French Revolution" in the *Times* (then a daily paper costing 7d. a copy), and contributed regularly to the newly started comic paper *Punch*.

Consequently he was not unknown when, in 1847, his first story, "Vanity Fair," made its appearance in twenty-four numbers, after the manner of those days. So small was the sale of these early parts, that there was an idea of stopping the sale; but it became increasingly popular, and finally it "set him at once and by a bound" in the front rank of fiction. "One returns again and again to it, with its freshness, its depth and terrible truth and power . . . its living talk, its abounding wit and fun—one of the great masterpieces of genius in our, or indeed in any, language."

"Vanity Fair" was followed by "Pendennis" in 1848 and "Esmond" in 1852. "Esmond" has been called a "miracle of story-telling," and the fortunes of the hero with the beautiful Beatrix are still followed by each generation of readers with breathless interest.

The "Newcomes" and the "Virginians" followed,

and in 1860 Thackeray became the editor of a new magazine, the *Cornhill*, which still lives. Three years later he died. "Others may walk down to the pier with us, but we must make the voyage alone," he had written. He died alone in the night of Christmas Eve, quite unexpectedly, at the age of fifty-two. The familiar form, standing over six feet high, the open face with its broad forehead and long white hair, had passed from sight, but Thackeray had left his country an undying heritage.

He wrote, not for the moment, but for all time. With his large understanding he depicted scenes with a humour which was never unkind, he wrote of the vanities and weaknesses of mankind, he drew pictures of beauty marred by canker, of inner depths of purity and truth unobserved, and all with a tender sympathy and with a love of goodness and "true lovingkindness over-arching it all." The first number of the *Cornhill Magazine* published after his death contained these lines:—

> "O gentle censor of our age,
> Prime master of our ampler tongue,
> Whose word of wit and generous page
> Were never wrath, except with wrong."

XVII

SOME GREAT PAINTERS

(*Turner*, 1775–1851; *Watts*, 1817–1904)

"We're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see;
And so they are better painted—better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that.
God uses us to help each other, so
Lending our minds out."—BROWNING.

A FRIEND and contemporary of Tennyson was the famous painter G. F. Watts. Born two years before and dying three years after Queen Victoria, he lived right through the whole period of our history. As soon as he could hold a pencil he began to draw, and his first picture, "The Wounded Heron," was hung in the Royal Academy in 1837—the very year of the Queen's accession.

The Royal Academy was then holding its sixty-ninth summer exhibition in London. Sir David Wilkie was still exhibiting; Landseer the well-known animal painter, Lawrence the portrait painter, David Cox the landscape painter—all had pictures in the Academy of that year. But the greatest of all the painters at this time was

J. M. W. Turner. This painter was already sixty-two at the Queen's accession, and perhaps his best work had already been done. But it was not till the reign had well advanced, and Turner was painting no more pictures, that Englishmen began to realise what a great man had been living and working for them.

The son of a London barber, he had his first picture hung in the Academy when he was but twelve years old. From this time onwards till his death, in 1851, he exhibited no less than 259 pictures, only missing four Academies in sixty years—a wonderful record of industry. Two years after the Queen came to the throne, he painted one of his best known pictures, "The Fighting *Téméraire* Tugged to her Last Berth." An almost unearthly splendour of sea and sky surrounds the glorious old battleship, already belonging to a past date.

> "The flag which braved the battle and the breeze
> No longer owns her."

One of Turner's leading characteristics—that of blending the highest lights with the deepest depths—is here very marked. He refused to sell this picture, which he valued himself at two hundred guineas, and bequeathed it with many others to the nation at his death. It may be seen to-day at the National Gallery, which was opened in Trafalgar Square, 1838.

In the year 1843 Ruskin stood forth as the champion of Turner and his art: "Modern Painters" explained some of the characteristics of Turner's greatness to an astonished public. "Turner stands," cried Ruskin, "a giant among painters, the only perfect landscape painter whom the world has ever

seen—a man standing upon an eminence from which he looks back over the universe of God and forward over the generations of men—one of the best seven colourists in the whole world."

Such, then, was the man who worked to bequeath his best to the English people whom he loved. He was rough in manner, shabby in dress, and illiterate, but he had the kindest of hearts and the highest of aspirations. He died alone and friendless under an assumed name in a Chelsea lodging by the Thames; but he was laid in St. Paul's, near to another great English painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds. At the time of his death a great change was coming over English art, when three artists—Rossetti, Millais, and Holman Hunt—were making a protest against the insincerities of the day.

The pre-Raphaelite movement was a revolution in the ideals and methods of painting. Together with William Morris and Burne-Jones, this little group of artists succeeded in bringing back to English painting, something of "the intensity, the tenderness, the mysticism, of the age of Botticelli."

Not only was painting affected by this movement, but architecture, furniture, wall-papers, and decoration of all kinds began to assume more beauty and simplicity, and the struggle against conventionality carried on by Carlyle and Ruskin was bearing fruit in every direction.

All through this time of change the artist Watts was working steadily and fearlessly at his subject pictures, undisturbed by the voices of smaller men. He painted portraits of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and William Morris, who were ever his friends, and bequeathed them to England. With them he struggled against the insincerity of the age;

his own ideal was to strengthen the foundations of Goodness, Joy, and Beauty in this hard-working world, to speak of Hope to the hopeless, to show Death as a friend rather than a foe and Love as the greatest force in life. Thus he became a teacher, interpreter, and prophet as well as an artist, and his pictures were among the most inspiring influences of the Victorian Age.

He loved children. One of his pictures, "Whence? Whither?" showed humanity as a little child just come from the great ocean and making its first steps on land. He echoed Tennyson's thought:—

> "Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
> From that true world within the world we see,
> Whereof our world is but the bounding shore."

"Good Luck to your Fishing" and "Promises" were both studies of children in all the beauty and innocence of childhood. "Sir Galahad" was among the best known of Watts's pictures. A copy hangs in Eton College to-day, an ideal of all that is good and pure for England's schoolboys. It represents Sir Galahad, the youthful knight to whom alone it was granted to achieve the Holy Grail. The boy stands bareheaded in a wood, lit by sunshine, beside his white horse, while he gazes fearlessly at the mystic vision of the Holy Grail before him.

But, great artist as he was, the man himself was even greater. If his studio was one of the busiest workshops the world has ever seen, it was also the scene of many a triumph over self.

"When I was a boy," he has told us, "I had the same difficulty in getting up that besets other young people, so I made my bed on the floor and in the morn-

ing there was no inducement to lie on." To the end of his eighty-seven years Watts rose at sunrise; he worked without ceasing to the end of his days. He felt that the joy of a man's life should be in his work. "The Utmost for the Highest" was ever his inspiring motto. He deplored the greed for money which he felt was growing throughout the Victorian Age and the vulgar standard of living which followed in its train. His pictures "Mammon" and "For he had Great Possessions" dealt with this feeling that money was the object of work and existence.

A keen patriot, it was his desire to keep England as a moral force in the forefront of the nations. He loved his country, because he felt she had a great part to play in the progress of the world. He wanted to see every man a patriot, every man a figure of dignity and honour worthy of his country. Against gambling, drunkenness, and idleness he fought, as is shown by some of his finest pictures, as "Jonah" and "Can these Bones Live?" In an age of materialism he stood out from the crowd as a soul apart—"a citizen of the world, but outside, beyond, and above it." Like his predecessor Turner, he bequeathed his best to the nation. This included 150 portraits of the leading men of his day.

Simply he had lived, simply he died.

XVIII

TWO GREAT ENGLISHMEN

(*Carlyle*, 1795–1881; *Ruskin*, 1819–1900)

"You have vowed your life to England; give it her wholly, a bright, stainless, perfect life—a knightly life."—RUSKIN.

IF the artist Watts set a high ideal before his fellow-countrymen, so also did his famous contemporaries Carlyle and Ruskin. Though they were totally unlike in other ways, both these men insisted on placing a higher standard of conduct before English men and English women, both fearlessly denounced the "shams" of the day and the hard class distinctions that prevailed during the early years of the Victorian era.

"Realities alone have strength," cried Carlyle.

"Life is real," said Ruskin. "It does not vanish away; every noble life leaves the fibre of it, for ever, in the work of the world"; and again: "All true education begins in work. What we think or what we know or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only thing of consequence is what we *do*, and for man, woman, or child the first point of education is to make them do their best."

"All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it

but hand labour, there is something of Divineness. Labour, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven; it is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother."

Thus, as social reformers, these two strong writers tried to impress on their fellow-countrymen the need for more honesty in all work; they must be truer in speech, kinder in their dealings one toward another, braver, stronger, freer, happier.

Thomas Carlyle, the rugged, kindly historian, was born in 1795, near the borders of Scotland. He was the son of a village mason and educated at the village dame-school till he was seven. At the Queen's accession he was over forty, married, and living in a small house in Chelsea.

The Carlyles were very poor, but he was busy writing his great history of the French Revolution. He had worked very hard for five months on it, when he took his manuscript to his friend John Stuart Mill for his opinion. John Stuart Mill lent it to another friend, whose maid by mistake burnt it, only "four or five bits of leaves" being left. In an agony of regret poor Mill made his way to the little house in Chelsea to confess what had happened. The loss of his manuscript was a terrible blow to Carlyle; he had no second copy of the work, not even notes.

With magnificent energy he set to work to rewrite it, with these brave words on his lips: "We must try and hide from Mill, poor fellow, how very serious this business is to us."

The "French Revolution" was written and published in 1837, and with it the name of Thomas Carlyle sprang into fame. His voice "rang into the

air like a trumpet"; England recognised that a great writer had arisen, with power to make himself heard.

This was followed by "Past and Present," "Sartor Resartus," and "Lectures on Heroes and Hero Worship," till in 1865 the publication of "Frederick the Great" secured his fame.

Here was a man who did not fear to speak against those vices which beset all ages and eat away the heart of a nation—idleness, dishonesty, insincerity. As a prophet he saw plainly and clearly the evils arising from these things, and out of the fulness of his great heart he cried to the England he loved, utterly regardless of what men thought or said. His remedy for everything was work, on which subject he had a right to speak, for he gave us no less than thirty-four volumes in the course of his long life. If men could not get work in England, then Carlyle pointed them beyond the seas; out amid the great unknown forests or in the sun-washed plains there would be work enough for those who were ready to toil, for toil alone could invigorate the manhood of our land and fulfil the destiny of our race.

A few years before the end he, like Watts, was offered a title. He had no children to inherit his name or honours and he refused it at once. "Very proper of she (the Queen) to think of it, and more proper of he to have nothing to do with it. 'Tisn't that as can do honour to the likes of he," truly observed a Chelsea omnibus conductor.

In 1881 Thomas Carlyle died. He might have been laid in Westminster Abbey with other great men, but he had expressed a wish to lie in his father's village at Ecclefechan, and thither they bore him at the last.

His disciple, John Ruskin, still worked on. He had been born the same year as his Queen, he died just a year before her. His mother was a daughter of a Yarmouth seaman, his father "an entirely honest merchant." Brought up with a birch rod after the fashion of the day, he could read at the age of four, and wrote poems at seven. Nature was ever his teacher; he was strangely sensitive to every passing cloud and the effect of sun and shadow on mountain and hill.

The serious work of his life began in 1843, when the young Queen had reigned six years, and he published his first volume on "Modern Painters," inspired by the work of Turner, who for forty-one years had painted in lonely grandeur, little appreciated by the people for whom he worked. The book at once attracted attention. It was followed in 1849 by "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" and two years later by "The Stones of Venice." This last book was hailed with joy by Carlyle as well as by young Charlotte Brontë, who exclaimed, "Mr. Ruskin seems to me one of the few genuine writers as distinguished from book-makers of this age."

In 1860 he appeared as a social reformer with a small book, "Unto this Last," which he himself considered his best work. "There is no wealth but Life," he says—"Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest, which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings."

When Ruskin died in 1900, at the age of eighty-one, he left England no less than eighty distinct works. Though he was ever a great admirer of Carlyle, he never wrote in the rugged style of his master. He wrote in beautiful pure English, and has been called

a "giant master of the English language." He has described to us the night mists rising from off the plain, the "strange laughings and glitterings of the silver streamlets," "the sky . . . never the same for two moments together, almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity."

The fearless way in which he denounced that which he thought wrong in life and art, his honesty of purpose and earnestness, have raised him to a high place amid those who helped our Victorian England. For her he created a new interest in the beauty of Nature, he raised the ideals of life and ennobled the standard of our conduct.

"Gentlemen of England, if ever you would have your country breathe the pure air of heaven again and receive again a soul into her body, you must think and feel for your England as well as fight for her."

XIX

WAR IN THE CRIMEA
(1854)

"Thy great Mother-heart is bleeding,
Torn and piercèd through and through."—TRENCH.

WHILE these men were writing and painting, keeping England up to her great ideals and traditions, she was drifting into war. For forty long years she had been at peace, and the children whose fathers had fought at Waterloo were growing up in a happy belief that wars were things of the past for us and that there would be no more fighting yet awhile. Such, as we have already seen, was the hope of the Prince Consort at the Great Exhibition.

But this long dream of peace was rudely broken by a crisis which arose in the Far East. Russia had been growing in size and power for some time past, under the Tsar Nicholas. He himself had visited England in 1844, and impressed every one with his "noble presence, his lofty stature, and his singular personal beauty." He had made friends with the Queen and the Duke of Wellington, and had honestly wished to keep on terms of friendship with them. But he had grown aggressive, and there was little doubt that he

regarded Turkey with a jealous eye, and would fain make Constantinople his own.

In spite of continual warnings, he continued his policy, until the autumn of 1853. Then one day the great Russian fleet sailed from the strongly fortified harbour of Sebastopol in the Crimea and destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope, killing four thousand Turks and wounding four hundred, while Sinope itself was knocked to pieces by the Russian guns. When the tidings of this butchery reached Europe, a cry of wrath and vengeance arose.

Turkey was weak; a "sick man—a very sick man," the Tsar Nicholas had called him, and much danger would ensue should Russia overwhelm the sick man. This Massacre of Sinope, as it was called, brought matters to a crisis, and in February, 1854, news reached the Tsar that England and France intended to help Turkey.

But after the long peace of forty years, England was totally unprepared for war. The arts of industry had flourished and enthusiasm for military glory had cooled. True, the old Duke of Wellington had never ceased to impress on his country the danger of being thus unready for war, but England would not listen to the old soldier, though events in the Crimea were so soon to prove that he was right.

When war was declared there was not a single transport ship in the service. Since the days of Waterloo steam had superseded sail, but steam navigation was very expensive, so most of the transport to the Crimea was done by means of sailing vessels. The distance from England to the seat of war was just about half the distance to which troops were shipped for the South African War, but the time taken was infinitely longer. So long was it since

England had experienced the din and turmoil of war that the Army had fallen into a disorganised state. The Commander was an old man of sixty-six. Lord Raglan had served on the staff of the Duke of Wellington and lost his arm at Waterloo, but most of his life had been spent in office work. He never returned from active service.

The Crimea, so well known to us to-day, was at this time merely a name. It was a Russian province, jutting out into the Black Sea, and contained the strong fortress of Sebastopol—a second Gibraltar, where all the military stores were collected and where Russian ships lay at anchor under the protection of the great guns in the fort.

Thither in February, 1854, both English and French sailed (for the old enemies were now allies), but it was September before they actually landed on Russian soil. The troops embarked in a hurricane of wind and rain 30 miles to the north of Sebastopol. The first night in the Crimea was but typical of the misery that was to follow. Drenched to the skin, officers and men were huddled round the camp fires with no shelter from the pitiless storm. The ships had already arrived and a determined attack by land and sea was arranged.

On September 19th the Allies were ready to advance. English and French together formed a formidable body. Picturesque they must also have been, with the red caps of the Turks in their midst. But they were not to arrive at Sebastopol without fighting. On September 20th they reached the banks of the Alma, to find the Russians had already taken up a splendid position, and were in great force upon the hills that surmounted the opposite side of the river. To reach the fort the Allies had to cross the

River Alma: to cross the Alma they must fight the whole Russian army in position. Heavy guns commanded the highest points, masses of infantry covered the plateau beyond. It was small wonder that the Russian commander thought the position was unassailable. He watched the advance of his foes and allowed them to approach the river, which he intended to be their grave. He could not hear the words of the French commander, "With such men as you, I have no orders to give—I have but to point at the enemy"; or the passionate answer given by one of the British commanders when a retreat was suggested, "It is better, sir, that every man should be dead upon the field, than that they should turn their backs upon the enemy."

Such was the spirit in which the Allies approached their foes. The Battle of the Alma has been called an "heroic scramble"—heroic it undoubtedly was. The river was crossed under deadly fire and the opposite heights were climbed with magnificent courage and stubborn perseverance by English, French, and Turks. In other words, "They saw the heights, they saw the enemy there, they made for him, they got at him, they would not go back, so he had to give way."

The Russians fled discomfited and the Allies stood victorious on the heights. Lord Raglan urged an advance on Sebastopol, but the French General refused and the few days' delay gave the Russians time to make arrangements to withstand the siege of Sebastopol. Meanwhile a brilliant idea had already occurred to the Russian genius General Todleben, who was in command of the defences of the fort. Under the very eyes of the Allies, who mistook their actions, he sank seven Russian war-

ships at the entrance of the harbour, till only the tops of their masts were visible. The harbour was thus completely blocked and no attack by sea was possible.

The Allies now marched on to Balaklava, to the south of Sebastopol, where early on the morning of October 25th they were attacked by the Russians. "Never did a day do more credit to British courage"; it will ever be memorable in English history for the famous Charge of the Light Brigade, when, owing to a fatal mistake, six hundred men charged "the Russian army in position."

"It was yet early on the morning of October 25th. Fleecy clouds hung about the low mountain tops, the blue patch of sea beyond Balaklava shone in the morning sun, while flashes gleamed from the masses of armed men in the plains. At half-past ten, like a grey cloud, the Russian cavalry galloped to the brow of the hill that cut the plain in two. In all their pride and glory, they swept along the heights, while the British waited breathlessly below.

"Lord Raglan stood on a hill overlooking the plain. The battle had already begun, when he sent down a young officer, named Nolan, with a message that the cavalry must attack at once. The order was given to Lord Cardigan, who commanded the Light Brigade. It was vaguely worded. Nolan had merely pointed to a line of Russians on the heights: There, my lord, are the Russians; there are your guns."

But never had such a thing been asked of soldiers before. He knew there must be a blunder somewhere, but the discipline of the Army forbade him to question.

"The Brigade will advance," he said as he cast his eye over his splendid body of cavalry, so soon to

perish. The men were startled by the order, but it was—

> "Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die."

They settled down in their saddles, and in a minute they were riding hard "into the Valley of Death." They were literally mown down by a cross fire from the enemy, men and horses fell thick, but the Brigade never checked speed, never faltered.

With flashing steel above their heads and a British cheer that wrung the hearts of those who watched, they rode the mile of valley to within eighty yards of the great Russian battery. Right under the Russian guns they passed, cutting down the gunners as they stood. Then, some twenty minutes later, through dense clouds of smoke, the survivors made their way back across the plain—

> "All that was left of them,
> Left of six hundred."

When the little band of heroes had formed up for roll-call, it was found that a third of the whole had perished. The splendid discipline and courage of the English soldiers won the admiration of the whole civilised world.

Lord Raglan owned with pride, when the battle was won, that perhaps this was the finest thing ever attempted; while of world-wide fame to-day are the words which fell from the lips of the French General, "It is magnificent, but it is not war."

XX

THE FALL OF SEBASTOPOL

"A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land."—LONGFELLOW.

A FORTNIGHT had now passed since the Battle of Balaklava had been fought and won. The bombardment of Sebastopol was still going on, and the Russians were receiving constant reinforcements. Two of the Tsar's sons—the Grand Dukes Michael and Nicholas—had joined the forces, hoping soon for the overthrow of the enemy. A determined attack was now made on the English and French in the trenches.

It was Sunday morning, November 5th. The sun rose early behind the snows of the Caucasus, but though the upper air was bright, a thick fog overspread the hills around Sebastopol, wrapping the valleys in heavy darkness. Under cover of this, masses of grey-coated Russians crept unnoticed out of Sebastopol. The day was yet young when they attacked the Allies on the plains of Inkermann. For a while the battle raged almost in the dark, and through the drizzling mist great confusion prevailed. No command was possible. The Battle of Inkermann was just a hand-to-hand struggle and has been called

the "soldiers' battle." Men of all ranks distinguished themselves, and after many hours of fierce fighting the Russians were obliged to retreat. The battle was won, but at fearful cost. Of the fourteen thousand men who had been engaged, four thousand lay dead on the field, while a yet greater number of Russians had perished. No further fighting on either side was possible now for a time, and the terrible winter in the desolate Crimea had to be faced by the Allies.

Nine days later their sufferings began with a fearful storm of wind and rain. The hurricane tempest of November 14th is memorable for its wholesale destruction of life. Early in the morning a fierce wind arose, with heavy squalls of pelting rain. In a few minutes every tent was torn from its pegs and blown away, the wooden huts in which lay the sick and wounded from Inkermann collapsed, and heavy snowstorms added to the desolation of the scene.

Outside the port of Balaklava, ship after ship went down, and among others was one filled with warm clothing for the soldiers. The Battle of Inkermann of November 5th had proved that the army of the Allies must pass the winter in the barren Crimea, the storm of the 14th showed that they must face that winter without adequate supplies. Blankets, boots, rugs, socks, biscuits, rum, rice, meat, coffee—all were lost in the sunken ship.

So the hard Crimean winter set in, and the sufferings of the men in the trenches around Sebastopol were intensified by the appearance of cholera in their midst. Their hands and feet were often frostbitten by the cold, their clothes were in rags, and the food was insufficient. It was little wonder that they died by hundreds and thousands.

It must be remembered that this was the first war expedition that had ever been accompanied by war-correspondents to report progress to the English newspapers. Mr. Russell, the famous correspondent of the *Times*, sent home accounts from the seat of war, not only of the triumph of our victories and the glorious courage of our soldiers, but of our broken-down systems. He told the people at home of the blunders by which the very lives of our soldiers were endangered, of the quantities of boots sent out for one foot only, of bad tinned meat fit only for destruction, so that "one man's meat is another man's poison," wrote *Punch* bitterly. The fact was that the systems of clothing, feeding, and nursing were all obsolete. The heart of England was soon touched :—

"Heart of England, faltering never in the good time or the ill,
But thy great day's task of duty strong and patient to fulfil."

On the eve of Inkermann a band of trained nurses, under Florence Nightingale, had made their way to Constantinople and thence to Scutari, where the great Turkish barracks had been turned into a hospital for the sick. The condition of things when they arrived was indescribable. The orderlies, who were in charge of the sick, were well-meaning, but often quite ignorant and very rough. For the first time in history women undertook the nursing, and the change was immense. Soon chaos gave way to order, dirt to cleanliness, ignorance to knowledge, misery to some degree of comfort.

True indeed were the words of the poet Longfellow as he pictured the "dreary hospitals of pain," the "glimmering gloom" and the English lady, with

her lamp, softly passing from bed to bed, while the "speechless sufferer" turned to kiss her shadow as it fell on the darkened walls :—

> "A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
> In the great history of the land."

The agony of that time has become a matter of history, and no war since the Crimea has been without its Red Cross band of trained nurses to alleviate the necessary pain of war.

Meanwhile the siege of Sebastopol was dragging heavily on. Peace negotiations had failed, the Tsar Nicholas had died—men said of a broken heart—but his son carried on the war with undiminished zeal.

Three months later—it was the anniversary of Waterloo—the Allies made a combined attack on the two strong forts of Sebastopol, the Malakoff, and the Redan. But the whole affair was mismanaged ; there was splendid energy and terrible loss of life, but the assault failed. It was the death of Lord Raglan. He was an old man and this defeat crushed him ; he became an easy prey to cholera and died ten days later. But things within Sebastopol were fast growing from bad to worse. The constant bombardment of the Allies was telling ; over 200 Russians perished daily from one cause or another. Even the proud defender Todleben was renouncing hope.

On September 5th the Allies were ready for another assault on the Malakoff and Redan. It was arranged that the French should storm the former, and when the flag of the French Empire floated from the parapets, then the English should advance on the Redan. But the Redan once more

proved too strong, and evening found many a brave life laid down in an unsuccessful attempt. The English were determined to renew the attack on the morrow. But on the morrow there was no Redan to attack. That night the Russians blew up their magazines, beginning with the Redan. Then they sank their remaining ships in the harbour and set fire to the city, after which, by means of a floating bridge, they beat a sad and last retreat.

"It is not Sebastopol we have left to them, but the burning ruins of the town, to which we ourselves have set fire," they said, "having maintained the honour of the defence in such a manner that our great-grandchildren may recall with pride the remembrance of it and send it on to all posterity."

It was true. Sebastopol had fallen at last, after its 349 days of siege, but not into the hands of the Allies. It had simply ceased to exist, though to-day it is again the naval base for the Black Sea.

Peace was now possible, and though Russia and Turkey were again at war twenty-two years later, England played no part in it. Glad indeed were officers and men to return home after their triumphs and after their sufferings. No less than twenty-two thousand had perished in the Crimea.

"Two years—an age of glory and of pain—
Since we with blessings and with shouts and tears
And with high hopes pursued your parting train—
With everything but fears.

Forth from beside our hearths we saw you pass,
And guessed that battle must be stern and strong;
War's shapes we saw—but dimly in a glass—
Its shapes of wrath and wrong.

> One thing we saw, one only thing we knew:
> Come what come might, ye would not bring to shame
> The loved land which trusted thus to you
> Its wealth of ancient fame."

Many indeed had been the acts of individual heroism, and to reward these the Queen now instituted the Victoria Cross. This decoration is a Maltese cross wrought in gun-metal of bronze colour, with the royal crest in the middle and below the words, "For Valour." On the back the date of the act of heroism is inscribed. The Victoria Cross carries with it a small pension of £10 a year.

It has been said that this Cross links all men together: "It stands as a symbol of the highest that man as man can attain, it places the hearts and the generous impulses of all men on a common level, and the words 'For Valour' are as dear to the noble duke as to the humblest private."

The Queen herself fastened the decoration on to the coats of sixty-two Crimean heroes who had earned it, while the enthusiastic cheering of the thousands who had assembled in Hyde Park for the occasion testified to the high approval of England's sons and daughters.

XXI

THE INDIAN MUTINY

"Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure."—TENNYSON.

BUT while the Queen was presenting the Victoria Cross on that summer day of 1857 to those of her brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in the Crimea, alarming news was reaching England of a native revolt in another part of her Dominions, a revolt known to history as the Indian Mutiny.

"There are times in the history of every nation when she must either fight or go down."

Such a time had come now. Swiftly, silently the blow fell, and heroically, alone, without an ally, against odds too great to be counted, England in the face of the world set to work to re-conquer India.

Discontent had long been simmering thoughout the country; Lord Dalhousie, one of the most famous Governor-Generals India has ever seen, had brought province after province under British rule. He had added Satara in 1848, the first year of his residence, and the Punjab in the following year. Later, the Rajah of Nagpur died without heirs and that Principality was likewise added to the British Dominions, being known to-day as the Central Provinces. After this the kingdom of Oudh was

annexed—a country as large as Belgium and Holland —until Lord Dalhousie had increased England's possessions in India by more than a third. A colossal worker, he sought to bind together the scattered parts by telegraph and railway. To this same end, he made the largest of Indian canals, he carried the Grand Trunk road through the Punjab, and only returned home to die, when his physical strength failed to bear the burden.

Utterly worn out with his efforts on behalf of the British Empire, he "tottered on crutches down the banks of the Hugli (Calcutta) to embark for England, predicting that troubles were ahead for India. England had increased her land, but there was no increase of English men to hold it.

This was because every one, both in India and at home, believed in the loyalty of the native soldiers, or Sepoys as they were called. When the Mutiny broke out, there were just five times as many Sepoys as British soldiers in India. At the death of Queen Victoria there was a large proportion of English soldiers, so that a repetition of this terrible catastrophe in English history is impossible.

But in 1857 there was a growing feeling among the natives that the old state of things was passing away; they thought the English wanted to make them Christians, and they believed the native prophecy that a hundred years after Plassey, English rule should cease. The anniversary fell on June 23, 1857, and but for the grand courage of Havelock, the fierce energy of Nicholson, the unsleeping toil and forethought of Lawrence, this prophecy would have come true.

Matters reached a climax at last.

Up to this time the Sepoys had been armed with a

musket popularly known as "Brown Bess." In 1857 an improved rifle, known as the Enfield, was substituted. It was rumoured that the new rifles required greased cartridges, and that they were greased with hog's lard, forbidden to Mohammedans. A panic of religious fear ran from regiment to regiment, from village to village.

Early in May some cartridges were served out to a native regiment at Meerut, near Delhi. They were refused by eighty-five Sepoys, who were tried, disarmed, publicly paraded, and marched in chains to the local prison, which was guarded by native officials.

The following day was Sunday. The weather was fiercely hot, but as evening wore on, the little English community made ready for church. They little thought that the church bells were to mark the beginning of the great Indian Mutiny. It was the arranged signal for the Sepoys to revolt.

They burst open the prison, released the eighty-five martyrs, and then proceeded to fire on their officers. Some thirty English against two thousand angry mutineers had little chance, and soon the dusky natives were marching forth in full battle array for Delhi, some thirty-eight miles distant.

Delhi, one of the oldest and stateliest towns in the newly acquired Punjab, on the sacred Jumna, was surrounded by a wall pierced by seven gates, about a mile distant one from the other. In the centre stood the Imperial Palace, where lived the last King of Delhi—the descendant of the Great Mogul. The mutineers arrived early on the morning of May 11th, shouting defiantly and slaying any English they met. Delhi was entirely held by Sepoys officered by Englishmen.

These Englishmen with their wives and children were now butchered without mercy or pity, and in a few days the mutineers had possession of the whole city, which they held till September, besieged by a mere handful of British. On June the 7th an English officer named Willoughby, in "heroic despair," blew up the powder-magazine to save it from falling into the hands of the enemy.

It has been said that "nothing in British history is a more kindling tale of endurance and valour than the story of how for months a handful of British clung to the Ridge outside Delhi, fighting daily with foes ten times more numerous than themselves," besieging the great city, which was the heart of the whole Mutiny, till at the last John Nicholson bought it with his life.

Meanwhile the Mutiny was breaking out in other parts of India. Cawnpore, on the banks of the Ganges, was 270 miles from Delhi, an important military station with vast magazines and a rich treasury. It was held only by Sepoys and a mere handful of British soldiers. An old man of seventy-five, Sir Hugh Wheeler, was in command.

On June 4th the Sepoys revolted, secretly roused by Nana Sahib, a powerful Hindu, who pretended to be on friendly terms with the English, while playing the villain's part of a traitor. The little white population entrenched themselves as best they might behind low mud walls and here for three long and dreary weeks a few Englishmen defended themselves, their wives, and children against the onslaught of the enemy. By the third day all shelter had been destroyed and the hot Indian sun beat pitilessly down on the sick and wounded.

"The annals of warfare contain no episode so

painful as the story of this siege," says Sir George Trevelyan. "The sun never before looked on such a sight as a crowd of women and children cooped within a small space and exposed, during twenty days and nights, to the concentrated fire of thousands of muskets and a score of heavy cannon."

The days passed heavily by, each with its deeds of heroism, its acts of self-sacrifice, its pitiful record of wasted life. In three weeks no less than 250 had died from hunger, thirst, and wounds. On June 23rd—the anniversary of Plassey—a determined assault was made by the enemy, but in vain. The following day found the little garrison in despair. "The British spirit alone remains," wrote the old General, "but it cannot last for ever." This was true, and when, on the twenty-first day, Nana Sahib offered a safe passage to Allahabad to those willing to surrender, he felt obliged to accept for the sake of the women and children.

Slowly the feeble remnant of the besieged, "speechless and motionless as spectres" tottered from their forlorn shelter, to make their way to the banks of the Ganges, for them "the Valley of the Shadow of Death." They had not reached the boats, when suddenly a bugle rang through the silent air and from the banks of the river a murderous fire was poured into the hapless crowd. Sir Hugh Wheeler was among the first to perish. Happy were those whose sufferings were not prolonged.

Some hundred and twenty survivors were dragged back to Cawnpore, where a yet more terrible fate awaited them. Here they were crowded into a small building with two rooms, no bedding, and no furniture; the English ladies were made to grind corn for the traitor Nana, who had already murdered all

the men, their husbands, brothers, and sons. Sickness and death thinned their ranks day by day. They did not know of the help even now approaching. General Havelock, a little iron-grey man, no longer young, with the "tiniest force that ever set forth to the task of saving an empire" was marching hard from Allahabad to the relief of Cawnpore. "If India is ever in danger," it had been said, "let Havelock be put in command of an army and it will be saved."

These words were ringing true now. On July 7th he began his march at the head of 1,500 men in a gallant if vain attempt to save the English women and children imprisoned at Cawnpore. The ground over which they marched was swampy with the first furious rains of summer, the skies were white with the glare of an Indian sun in July; but Havelock inspired his men with his own scorn of ease, his strong sense of duty, and deep earnestness, and "Havelock's Saints" as they have been called, never wavered in their allotted task.

They were resting at Futtehpore after five days of hard marching, when, with wild shouts, a huge mass of native cavalry rushed upon them. Fiercely and swiftly the little English band advanced; in ten minutes they had captured the rebel guns and the Nana's troops were in full flight. It was not till the 17th that, having marched 126 miles and fought four battles, Havelock reached the outskirts of Cawnpore.

But he was too late. A grim and awful massacre of the women and children had just taken place, by orders of Nana Sahib, from which not one soul had escaped alive, and all the bodies had been thrown into a well in the courtyard hard by. When

Havelock and his men entered the room where their fellow-countrywomen had been butchered so lately, the scene was both horrible and pitiful. The floor was strewn with relics: there were pinafores, little shoes and hats, the fly-leaf of a Bible, and some children's curls—all speaking of a time of anguish unspeakable.

To-day over the well at Cawnpore where the poor bodies were thrown stands a white marble angel by Marochetti with clasped hands and outspread wings—a memorial of those sufferings, which are part of the price of Empire.

XXII

LUCKNOW AND DELHI

"And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew."—TENNYSON.

BUT there was no rest for Havelock and his brave little force. A few days later found him crossing the now swollen Ganges for the 45 miles' "march of fire" to Lucknow, a march that was to take him nine weeks to accomplish.

On May 20, 1857, Sir Henry Lawrence had arrived at Lucknow, the capital of the newly acquired provinces of Oudh, as Chief Commissioner. Though barely fifty, he looked like an old man after years of toil under the Indian sun; his thin cheeks were deeply lined and a long ragged beard added to his look of age. He was worn with deep anxiety, for he realised as no other Indian official how deep-seated was the discontent of the Sepoys. He foresaw a native rising of some sort and prepared for it. Quietly and simply he cleared a space round the Residency for the defence of Europeans in the town, laid in great supplies of grain, powder, and arms, and while others slept he disguised himself and visited the native town to learn the true progress of events for himself.

The summer wore on. It was the last day of June

when, about sunset, the Sepoys rose and swarmed angrily and defiantly into the town. Under a deadly fire the British withdrew to the Residency—some nine hundred Englishmen, with their wives and children—to be surrounded by fifteen thousand armed mutineers. One of their first acts was to put up the Union Jack.

"Banner of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd thee on high,
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of Lucknow—
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew."

So dawned the first night of the famous siege of Lucknow, the story of which still thrills us though more than fifty years have passed away. "My God, my God! and I have brought them to this," moaned the brave Commissioner, as he took up his quarters in an upper room from which he could observe all that went on. But the room was exposed to the shot of the enemy, and the second day of the siege a shell crashed through the wall and burst—a sheet of flame lit the room and Sir Henry Lawrence was fatally injured.

"Sir Henry, are you hurt?" cried a friend who was with him.

There was a moment's silence.

"I am killed," answered the wounded man firmly.

He was right; the wound was fatal. He had but thirty-six hours to live. His one thought was how best to defend the Residency.

"Let every man die at his post—never make terms—God help the poor women and children!" he said in

broken snatches to those around him as he lay dying. Then, speaking rather to himself than to others, he murmured the now historic words, "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty," words which were carved on his tombstone and may be seen to this day at Lucknow. Tennyson has put this last day of Lawrence's life into verse:—

"Frail were the works that defended the hold that we held with our lives—
Women and children among us, God help them, our children and wives!
Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or for twenty at most.
'Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!'
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence, the best of the brave:
Cold was his brow when we kiss'd him—we laid him that night in his grave."

Lawrence had thought that the relieving army under Havelock might arrive in fifteen days. He little realised the dangers to be encountered on the way. When he died, on July 4th, Havelock had not reached Cawnpore. He did not reach it for another fortnight and then was unable to leave for another week.

Furious rains had swollen the Ganges and it took four days to transport the little force across the waste of waters. In the face of obstacles, however, he made his way forward; during the first fifteen miles he had to fight two battles, in which he lost 250 men out of his small band of heroes. It was impossible to reach Lucknow till reinforcements arrived.

Meanwhile, as the month of July wore away pitiful indeed grew the state of the Residency. Sickness was increasing, mines had exploded within, weakening the defences and killing many of the brave defenders; wounded men lay in hospital,

women and white-faced children lived from day to day in peril of their lives. August wore on and September came and still the flag was kept flying from the top of the Residency.

It was not till September 16th that Sir James Outram with fresh troops arrived at Cawnpore. He was senior to Havelock and in command of the relief expedition; but with unbounded chivalry—worthy of the olden days—he renounced the glory of relieving the besieged city to Havelock, who had struggled so hard with his tiny force for the past three months. It was one of the finest acts of self-sacrifice in England's history.

On September 25th the troops under Havelock and Outram fought their way to Lucknow. Joyfully they detected the tattered banner, riddled with shot but still flying from the roof of the Residency. They were not too late to save the little garrison.

With renewed hope, headed by Havelock and Outram, the troops fought the great rebel host that had gathered around Lucknow, till at last they gained the narrow streets by the city, and in the dusk of that famous September evening they were greeted with a very shout of joy, in which even the sick crawled from their beds to join.

"Big, rough, bearded rescuers caught up the little half-starved and terrified children and kissed them with tears running down their cheeks, thanking God they were in time to save them from the terrible fate of the little ones in Cawnpore."

"All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant shout,
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with conquering cheers,
Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children come out,
Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's good fusileers.
Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet with their tears!

Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are saved!—is it you? is it you?
Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the blessing of Heaven!
'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held it for eighty-seven!
And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew."

But it was not till November 17th, that Sir Colin Campbell with fresh English troops carried the place by storm, and safely withdrew the women and children after their five months' agonised siege within the walls of Lucknow. Touching indeed was the death of Havelock, a few days after Sir Colin's arrival. His son, who had won the Victoria Cross, watched with him to the end, and one by one his faithful comrades came to bid him goodbye.

"I have for forty years so ruled my life, that when death came I might face it without fear," he said to Sir James Outram, who was with him to the end. They laid him "hard by the vast city, the scene alike of his toil, his triumph, and his death."

Meanwhile desperate had grown the siege of Delhi, which had lasted since June 4th. For three weary months the besieging force of English stood their ground, but they had not the strength to take the city, which was only relieved five days before Lucknow. The gallant commander, who had held the Ridge above the city for the first month, had died of cholera.

His successor was already a broken-down man and matters were growing desperate, when John Nicholson appeared on the scene and hope once more revived. He soon put fresh heart into the weary men and enthused them with his own youthful courage.

"If there is a desperate deed to be done in India, John Nicholson is the man to do it," men had said.

A "desperate deed" now awaited him. To look at him alone must have restored confidence. He was a man cast in a giant mould, of "commanding presence and with the heart of a lion" and almost superhuman strength. He soon showed that he had not come to wait, but to act and "the inspiration of his example on the Ridge was worth ten thousand men."

Delhi must be taken from the rebels and taken at once. This was decided, and it was arranged that five thousand men should make a last desperate attempt to wrest the city from its fifty thousand Sepoy defenders. John Nicholson himself, in command of the assault, was to lead the first company of a thousand men to the attack of the Cashmere Gate, while four others were to assault different points.

It was three o'clock in the early morning and the stars were still shining, when the men collected on that September day for one of the most daring exploits in history.

Nicholson stood out in front of his column, then he gave a signal, a fierce shout rent the air, and in the face of almost certain death, the men rushed forward. The great assault of Delhi had begnn.

The breach was soon carried, the enemy fell back, and Nicholson forced his way into the city. Men were falling to right and left of him, but the "Lion of the Punjab" strode on unhurt. His troops were growing tired and began to drag behind. But he turned and, waving his sword above his head, pointed onwards to the foe in front, entreating them to follow on at once. His tall, straight figure was an easy mark for the enemy. A Sepoy aimed

straight and John Nicholson fell, mortally wounded. The fighting went on, each column was successful, and the English made their way inch by inch into the city.

Through the next long days and nights Nicholson lay dying. His fall at the head of his men had made a deep impression on them.

"To lose Nicholson seemed at that moment to lose everything," said young Lieutenant Roberts,* who was having his first experience of active service at Delhi. The hero of Delhi just lived to hear that the city was in the hands of the English, that his life had not been given in vain. He was only thirty-seven when he died, a splendid specimen of an Irish soldier, and a grand example of lion-hearted courage.

With the capture of Delhi and Lucknow the Mutiny came to an end. It was arranged that the East India Company, which had governed India up to this time, should now cease to exist, and a better system of government should be established. An English Viceroy was appointed to serve under the Queen, who twenty years later, was proclaimed "Empress of India" † amid scenes of the greatest enthusiasm.

* Afterwards Earl Roberts of Kandahar.

† See page 158.

XXIII

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN AND THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE

"Not here! The white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole."—TENNYSON.

AMONG the many famous names that shine out in this history of the great Victorian Age, none is more inspiring than that of the old Arctic explorer Sir John Franklin, who perished in the attempt to find the North-West Passage. Glorious, if pathetic, is the story of his ill-fated expedition, with its magnificent example of brave resolution, dogged endurance, and splendid perseverance. It is the story of unparalleled hardship, of nobly borne suffering, and of patient waiting, which excites our admiration and kindles our high regard for these our countrymen, ever ready to do and dare as their forefathers had done in the years that were past.

Arctic exploration had been somewhat at a standstill since the days when Henry Hudson had perished amid the ice and snows of the Far North. But in the early days of the nineteenth century the old fascination seized upon Englishmen once more. The spirit

of adventure was abroad. Ten years before the Queen's accession Parry, the "Champion of the North," returned from an unsuccessful attempt to reach the North Pole. The failure of another Arctic expedition in 1843 once more roused public interest, and England resolved to forge the last link, that might connect the chain of former discoveries needed to complete the North-West Passage.

There was no lack of stout-hearted sailor-men ready to volunteer for the command, but the man chosen was Sir John Franklin, who had already greatly distinguished himself in Arctic exploration. He was an enthusiastic old sailor; and when his chief —the first Lord of the Admiralty—suggested that he was rather old for such an undertaking at the advanced age of sixty, Franklin exclaimed eagerly, "My lord, you have been misinformed; I am only fifty-nine."

This decided the matter, and there was no time to be lost in starting. Two ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, but lately returned from the Arctic regions, were selected for the purpose with a crew of 134 souls—23 officers and 111 men—provisioned for three years. All were in the highest possible spirits, full of zeal and enthusiasm for the cause, and resolved to end for ever the vexed question of a North-West Passage.

And so they passed from the shores of England into everlasting silence. A few brief but happy letters reached home during the next two months, and then there were no further tidings. Two years passed. Still there was no news from any member of the Franklin expedition. Anxiety deepened, and fears for their fate were whispered about.

In June, 1848, Sir J. Ross, an old Arctic explorer,

sailed from England in search of the missing ships. He actually sailed to within three hundred miles of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, which had been deserted just four months. But he neither saw nor heard anything of them or their crew, and he returned sadly with no news of the missing expedition. Again rewards were offered both by the Government and Lady Franklin, until by the autumn of 1850 no less than fifteen ships were engaged in searching for Franklin and his crew, though all hopes of finding them alive had long since been given up. Three sailors' graves were found on Beechey Island in the Far North, and then silence fell till 1854.

Though nine years had now passed since the joyous start of Franklin and his crew, the interest was still intense, and a new expedition was fitted out under Captain M'Clintock, who brought home a good deal of information of the missing ships and crew. Piecing together the various odds and ends of news gleaned by those who had gone in search, we get the following harrowing story.

On June 1st the *Erebus* and *Terror* had reached the Orkney Islands. Boisterous winds carried them due west across the North Atlantic Ocean, till three weeks later they sighted Greenland and rounded Cape Farewell for the north. Here they met their first ice and were considerably delayed by icebergs. The ships pursued their solitary way through Baffin's Bay, Lancaster Sound, to Beechey Island, at which point the winter ice must have finally blocked them in. Here they settled down to face the hardships of an Arctic winter, until the faint rays of the returning sun appeared on the distant hills and small parties could venture forth in search of game and fresh food. If they were disappointed at the failure of the

expedition to reach a more advanced point before seeking winter quarters, they could encourage themselves with the cheering prospect before them. They had already explored some 300 miles of new coast-line and they knew that only 250 miles of the unknown lay between them and their great discovery. Leaving three graves on Beechey Island and a record of their doings, they left—probably about July—and made their way onwards.

All must have gone well for a time, though they must have had a hard fight through the narrow channels now known as Peel Strait and Franklin Straits, towards King William's Land. Some hundred miles more and their work would be done, when suddenly the ships must have been caught by a rigid bar of pack ice, from which there was no escape. They were fast frozen in a solid mass, and here they were doomed to spend their second winter.

It has not been given to many Arctic explorers to spend two winters following among the ice of the Far North, and feelings akin to despair must have seized the cheery little crews and their plucky commander. It was an unexpected blow, but there was nothing to be done but to face it with as much cheerful endurance, as was possible under the circumstances and look forward to the summer.

So the long winter passed away and hope returned with the daylight. But so strong was the ice that beset them, that even the summer sun could not melt it. In vain did they try to force a channel; the ice was impenetrable. It was now May, 1847, just two years since they had left England. A small party, two officers and six men, set off to explore the coast of King William's Island. They succeeded in reach-

ing Cape Victory, named by Captain Ross some seventeen years before. And they went far enough to see in the distance the dim coast of North America, which told them that their sufferings had not been in vain, for the last link was forged, the North-West Passage discovered.

They deposited a record of their doings, which announced that Franklin was still commanding the expedition and that all was well, and hurried back to the ships. But they found all was no longer well. The Commander was no longer commanding the ships. On June 11th he passed away on the scene of his discoveries, still beset by the ice that he had fought so gallantly and so hopefully. Whether he lived to hear the news of his success we shall probably never know. He died in the faithful fulfilment of his duty, as many an Englishman had done before and many a one will yet do.

"We can picture, in our imagination, that last sad and solemn scene on the ice-floe—that hushed assembly of wan and famine-stricken men, whose pinched features and thin forms, clad in strange garments, tell of hardships and privations nobly and resolutely borne. They stand with hushed lips and bated breath, with their heads bowed in silent sorrow and prayer, round a grave that has been dug out of the solid ice, into which the remains of their beloved chief are quietly and reverently laid. The funeral service is read by Captain Crozier (who has succeeded to the command of the expedition) or perhaps by his more intimate friend Fitzjames, while that flag, the glorious flag of England, under which he had served so well and so faithfully in all parts of the world, fluttered half-mast from the mizzen peak of the two ships."

The ships now began very slowly to drift southwards with the ice, and there was every hope they might reach the American continent before winter was once more upon them, but suddenly the drifting ceased and they were beset with impenetrable barriers of ice. They had no choice but to spend a third winter on the ships, with a possibility of abandoning them the following spring.

It is terrible to think of the sufferings of the crews during this last winter. Starvation and disease did their work: officers and men died one by one, and the long dark winter, with its pitiless snows and bitter, howling winds, brought no hope to the ice-bound men.

We know there were still 105 survivors in the April of 1848 with provisions to the following July—for this was the date when they finally abandoned the two ships and made their way to Point Victory, where they left their last record, stating that they were starting for the Fish River. They made their way with sledges along the coast-line of King William's Island, where skeleton after skeleton told its dreary tale of suffering. The sun had no power as yet, it was—

> "All waste, no sign of life
> But the track of the wolf and the bear,
> No sound but the wild, wild wind
> And the snow crunching under their feet."

Forty white men had been seen by the Esquimaux about this time dragging sledges and a boat across the snow; they were very thin and "they fell down and died as they walked along." Certain it is none of them reached the Great Fish River, for which they were making, for not a man of all that crew

survived. Relics were discovered and brought back to England from time to time. Cooking stoves were found, watches, blankets, there was a well-marked Bible and a copy of "The Vicar of Wakefield."

To-day amid the ice and snow and desolation of Beechey Island are these words, engraved on a tablet:

TO THE MEMORY OF

FRANKLIN, CROZIER, FITZJAMES

and all their gallant officers and faithful companions who have suffered and perished in the cause of science and the service of their country

THIS TABLET

is erected near the spot where they passed their first Arctic winter and whence they issued forth to conquer difficulties or

TO DIE

to commemorate the grief of their admiring countrymen and friends and the anguish, subdued by faith, of her who has lost in the heroic leader of the expedition the most devoted and affectionate of husbands.

"And so He bringeth them unto the Haven where they would be."

1855.

XXIV

PREPARING THE EMPIRE

LIVINGSTONE AND STANLEY IN CENTRAL AFRICA

"I have opened the door; I leave it to you to see that no one closes it after me."—Dr. Livingstone.

WHILE Captain McClintock was bringing home the last news of Sir John Franklin to England (1859) another of England's bravest sons was preparing the way for civilisation in Central Africa, enduring untold hardships and "facing fearful odds" for the sake of his high mission.

And in this connection it is interesting to note how many great tracts of our Empire have been first opened up by missionaries and what brave pioneers and explorers they have proved themselves to be.

A few years after the Queen's accession, Livingstone, a young Scotsman, started on a five months' voyage to the Cape of Good Hope to take up missionary work among the natives of South Africa. Landing at Algoa Bay, after a long ox-wagon journey of 700 miles, he arrived at the Mission-station in the very heart of the country now known as British Bechuanaland. There he gained a know-

ledge of native languages, native customs, and laws which enabled him to do such good work later on. But the Boers, who had recently trekked to the Transvaal, looked toward Bechuanaland for the extension of their boundaries, and they raided the little Mission-station, carrying off the little black children as their slaves.

So Livingstone started northwards; he crossed the Kalahari Desert—a great wilderness of rocks and sand and lifeless scrub—and discovered the Lake Nyami, for which the Royal Geographical Society voted him twenty-five guineas.

He was as enthusiastic about his Mission work as his exploration.

"Cannot the love of Christ carry the missionary where the slave-trade carries the dealer?" he said. "I shall open up a path to the interior or perish."

The discovery of the Zambesi—the largest river in South Africa—added to his fame as a missionary. Into regions now owning Britain's sway he carried the name of Christian England. While performing the unparalleled feat of crossing Africa from ocean to ocean, east and west, he discovered the great Victoria Falls in that country, now known as Rhodesia. Then, after years of hardship, he took ship for England. The grief of his black attendants was pitiful. "Take us; we will die at your feet," they cried. Finally he agreed to take the chief, but the sea was wild and stormy, and the terrified man threw himself overboard and was drowned.

It is hard in these days, when books of travel are so common, to realise the immense interest created in England by the publication of Livingstone's Journals in 1857.

Englishmen had been interesting themselves more

of late in the great African continent, that was to play so large a part in her history. Natal had been added to the Empire, the independence of the Transvaal had been recognised by this country. Lake Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza had been discovered by Englishmen. The mysteries of the "Dark Continent" have exercised a great fascination over the minds of men and the "great spaces washed by sun" have attracted Englishmen before the famous days of Cecil Rhodes.

Livingstone's next achievement was the discovery of Lake Nyassa, now forming the boundary between Rhodesia and Portuguese Africa. He opened up the new country of Nyassaland, "for commerce and Christianity" which to-day is the heart of the Central African Protectorate, administered by an English Commissioner under our Colonial Office. It would take too long to follow the missionary explorer on his travels through Central Africa. Strong in purpose, high in courage, his toil was incessant, his industry unflagging.

In 1867 news reached England of his discovery of Lake Bangweolo, now included in Rhodesia and the waters of the Upper Congo, though he did not realise it was the Congo at all. Time passed on and a rumour reached England that he was dead. The last letter from him bore the date 1867. There was a repetition of that silence that surrounded the fate of Franklin. The silence was broken by H. M. Stanley, a journalist sent by the *New York Herald* to discover whether Livingstone was alive or dead. How the two men met in the very heart of Africa forms one of the romances of history.

Livingstone was one day sitting in his hut on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, when news arrived that

a white man had made his way from the coast and was searching for a friend. Soon the two English-speaking men were face to face.

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" said Stanley, as he looked at the old man before him with long, white beard and tired face, his form reduced to a mere skeleton for want of proper food. He wore an official cap with faded gold band, a red-sleeved waistcoat, and much-patched tweed trousers.

"Yes," answered the old explorer.

A warm grasp of hands followed.

"You have brought me new life—new life," murmured Livingstone, as the two men compared experiences. But in vain Stanley begged him to return to England; the old man resolutely turned away from home, with its well-earned comforts and honours; he could not rest till he had cleared up the mystery of Lake Tanganyika watershed. Stanley accompanied him some little way on his last heroic journey and then turned sadly back.

Two years after this Livingstone died. He died kneeling by his rough camp bed in that attitude of prayer which had dominated his life.

His faithful black servants buried his heart in the still forest near the shores of Lake Bangweolo and carried his body to the coast through swamp and desert, whence it was taken to England. Ever proud of her brave sons, Englishmen laid his body, "brought by faithful hands over land and sea," in Westminster Abbey with a simple record of his great work.

> "Open the Abbey doors and bear him in
> To sleep with kings and statesmen, chief and sage,
> The missionary come of weaver kin
> But great by work that brooks no lower wage."

The death of his friend Livingstone before the completion of his life-work made a deep impression on Stanley, and he resolved to follow in his steps and carry on the work.

In the year 1874, fresh back from the English expedition to Koomassie, he started for Zanzibar, bound for the great African lakes. As yet little was known of Victoria Nyanza and most of Central Africa was blank upon our maps. The expedition, numbering some 356, started inland on November 17th, carrying a cedar canoe, the *Lady Alice*, in sections to explore the lakes further. It was the end of February when, after 740 miles of marching, the first sight of Victoria Nyanza came into view and the men burst into cheers of delight. The little canoe was soon afloat and the lake was circumnavigated.

Having proved that the Nile left the northern end of the lake and for 300 miles raced between high rocky walls over rapids and cataracts till it flowed through Albert Nyanza to Khartum, Stanley made his way to the famous region of Uganda—the "Pearl of Africa"—where he was warmly received by the black king Mtesa. Stanley was greatly struck by the intelligence of the king, and grasped the possibilities of Uganda as a centre of civilisation. "With the aid of Mtesa the civilisation of equatorial Africa becomes possible;" he wrote home begging that missionaries might be sent at once to carry on the work, that he himself had begun.

Stanley now turned his attention to the watershed between the Nile and the Congo, making his way south to Lake Tanganyika, which he completely explored. Yet greater discoveries were before him as he now started on an eventful journey that was

to "flash a torch of light across the western half of the Dark Continent." His wanderings had already lasted two years, and his men were reduced to less than half the original number, when he turned westward through dense jungle to the still unknown basin of the Congo, at this time known as the River Livingstone and supposed to be the Nile. Great were the obstacles; fierce tribes attacked the little party and sickness broke out in their midst.

On Christmas Day, 1876, a crisis arose. Stanley's resolution alone saved the situation.

"My children, make up your minds as I have made up mine: we shall continue our journey and toil on and on by this river till we reach the great salt sea."

So the twenty-three canoes started off on the unknown river, heading for the Equator. A weary twenty days followed, cannibals appeared on the banks, the stream grew wild and turbulent, cataracts abounded, and at last the river suddenly narrowed and flung its waters over a wide precipice—the Stanley Falls. Then the river widened and Stanley knew he must be sailing down the great Congo river. All through the months of February and March he struggled with the raging waters—day after day it seemed as if the little canoe must be dashed to pieces—until in August, 1877, the coast was reached.

Stanley had explored the whole course of the Congo—a river three thousand miles in length—the second largest river in the world. Though the Congo State is administered by Belgium, England has many interests there, and Stanley's book "Through the Dark Continent" made no small stir in England when it appeared.

Such men as Franklin, Livingstone, and Stanley

were not only makers of history and pioneers of civilisation: they were very giants of perseverance and endurance—scorners of that luxury which tends to sap away the strength of our manhood and weaken our national character.

XXV

SOME ACCOUNT OF EGYPT AND THE SUDAN

"Egypt is the Nile and the Nile is Egypt."

WHEN Queen Victoria came to the throne, Egypt, though nominally part of the enormous Empire of Turkey, was practically in the hands of a self-made Albanian soldier, Mehemet Ali by name.

To realise how England came to play such a large part in the government of Egypt during the Victorian era, it is necessary to understand something about this Mehemet Ali and his successors.

By means of his military genius, intrigue, and personal ambition Mehemet Ali, though still a vassal of the Sultan, had risen step by step till he became the independent ruler of the land of Egypt. He conquered the Sudan as far south as Kordofan and Khartum was founded under his rule. He formed a regular army for the better security of his people, he introduced European civilisation and improved the water supply. He revived the prosperity of Alexandria by digging a canal to re-connect it with the Nile, and he more than doubled the revenue of the country. During his rule the overland route was first used from Europe to India, and Europeans were thus brought into the country. A new line

of English steamers—the Peninsular and Oriental (P. & O.)—landed passengers and mails at Alexandria, from which port they were conveyed overland on camels and donkeys to Suez, whence steamers took them on to India.

In 1842 it was agreed by the Western Powers that Mehemet Ali should, under the Sultan, become hereditary ruler of Egypt. Seven years later he died and was succeeded by his grandson Abbas.

This Abbas refused to have any dealings with Europe, though he permitted a railway to be undertaken from Alexandria to Cairo and encouraged the overland route. It was not till 1859 that, under his successor Said Pasha, the Suez Canal was begun under the influence of a Frenchman, Ferdinand de Lesseps. It was opened in 1869 by Said's successor Ismail, whose title had been changed from Pasha to Khedive—a Persian word for "Prince."

Meanwhile great progress had been made. Telegraph wires had been carried through the land, reaching as far as Khartum, capital of the Sudan. For Ismail had extended the authority of Egypt right away to the great lakes in Central Africa.

But the new Khedive was reckless and extravagant, and the "money of Egypt ran between his fingers like the desert sand," till at last financial difficulties obliged him to raise money by selling his shares in the Suez Canal—shares which were hastily bought by Lord Beaconsfield on behalf of the English Government.

Meanwhile a few isolated Englishmen were exploring Egypt to the south to discover the sources of the great life-giving Nile on which the whole prosperity of Egypt depended.

In the spring of 1861 Baker and his enterprising

Hungarian wife left Cairo on an expedition into the Sudan. Leaving Cairo, the Bakers sailed up the Nile for nearly a month to Korosko, whence they struck across the desert: a week on camels under scorching desert sun brought them to Abu Hamed, another week to Khartum, a miserable, unhealthy village, composed of huts built of unburnt bricks, at the junction of the White and Blue Niles. Khartum was full of merchants and slave-traders; dishonesty, deceit, cruelty, and fraud raged, and justice was almost unknown.

Through opposition and discouragement the Bakers made their way on to Gondokoro, the first English to enter this country of the ivory trade from the north. What was their astonishment when, one day, two Englishmen staggered into the straggling village, thin, wasted, fever-stricken; their knees showed through their trousers, their hair and beards were long and ragged.

Speke and Grant had made their way from the East Coast of Africa and discovered an immense lake which they had named Victoria Nyanza, after the Queen. They had heard there was another one beyond, but fierce tribes had made it impossible for them to reach it.

The Bakers now started off with renewed zest to complete the discoveries of Speke and Grant, who returned to England by the Nile and Egypt. This was the end of March, 1863. After a year of tremendous toil, they were rewarded one day by seeing from the summit of a hill the great new lake "like a sea of quicksilver" far beneath them. They at once named it Lake Albert Nyanza, after the Prince Consort,* who had died in England

* See page 144.

but two years before. After five years' exploring they carried home their glad news.

But Baker had seen too much of the miseries of the black population of the Sudan to rest at home. The year 1869 found him back in the Equatorial Provinces, with supreme authority over all the countries around Gondokoro. He was the first Englishman to fill a high post in the Egyptian service, with orders to suppress the slave-trade and open up the country for commerce.

In 1873, when Livingstone * was dying away in Rhodesia, Gordon Pasha took up the work. The name of Gordon will ever call up a vision of the Sudan—not, indeed, the more prosperous Sudan of to-day, but a land of oppression and injustice, of cruelty and slavery and suffering, a land for which he finally laid down his life.

At this time he was known as an able leader in China of Imperial forces against Tai-ping rebels, as a man with a very tender heart for all suffering, one who could meet "desperate troubles with a spirit that knew not despair, and breathe might into the trembling."

Such was the man who now took up the work of Baker for the suppression of slavery. For three years he contended manfully and almost single-handed with fearful odds. He never spared himself; he rode about on his camel huge distances under scorching sun over wastes of burning desert, meeting and dispersing in the Khedive's name savage bands of slave-holders. Sometimes he would go by river up the Nile, to find slaves smuggled down in innocent-looking boats with cargoes of wood and ivory. On being stopped, a hundred black, woolly heads would

* See page 135.

appear, and the slave-owner would tremble at finding himself face to face with the angry Governor of the Equatorial Provinces. Having established a chain of armed posts along the Nile and extended the Khedive's dominions to the Albert Nyanza, having laboured amid loneliness and solitude for three years, Gordon resigned his almost superhuman task and returned to England for a much-needed rest.

Simply enough he summed up his vast work in the far Sudan: "I have cut off the slave-traders in their strongholds and made the people love me." But no competent successor was appointed, and with Gordon's departure, all hope of suppressing the slave-trade in those vast regions to the south perished for the present.

XXVI

DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT

"We have lost him: he is gone:
We know him now: all narrow jealousies
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise."—

TENNYSON.

WHEN the great lake in Central Africa was named Albert Nyanza in 1864 by Baker, the Prince after whom it was named, had already died in the very prime of life and manhood at the age of forty-two.

It will be interesting to get a glimpse of his short career from the time of his marriage with the Queen, and to note, not only their extreme happiness, but also what the Prince Consort did for his adopted country.

Married to the young Queen early in 1840, just two and a half years after her accession to the throne, he had enjoyed unclouded happiness through twenty-two years, despite public difficulties and troubles. Cousins and the same age, they were romantically attached to one another, and the Royal home became happier with the addition of children. Their first child was a daughter, the Princess Royal, who afterwards married the Crown

Prince of Prussia and whose little son, born two years before her father's death, became Emperor of Germany. The little Prince of Wales was born in 1841; he married two years after his father's death and became King of England in 1901.

Handsome and gifted, Prince Albert was personally attractive; he had been well educated in Germany, he was very musical, and fond of the best literature; he was besides a practical farmer and deeply interested in machinery and science. He loved a quiet country life, but at the same time he was inspired by a keen sense of duty, and he helped the Queen in matters of State business, taking a substantial, if unrecognised, part in all matters of public note.

Still, he was very unpopular in England. Englishmen resented his supposed influence behind the throne and his quiet opposition to party system: they treated him as a foreigner, and refused him English titles, till at the Queen's request, they grudgingly named him the "Prince Consort."

It was mainly owing to his influence that duelling was abolished in the Army. To settle disputes by fighting was a common custom in the early days of Queen Victoria's reign, and many prominent men had already fought duels. But, as the Prince pointed out, it was a strange way of deciding between right and wrong, and a blot on a civilised country. So one of the last duels took place in England in 1843, and it was decided that for the future, honourable men should apologise instead of resorting to force.

The story of how he worked at the great Exhibition of 1851 has already been told.* His

* See page 73.

energy, his mastery of detail, his unfailing tact and public spirit were beginning to win for him some grudging esteem. But the Crimean War removed any trust and confidence that might have been growing for him in English hearts. The whole muddled campaign was attributed to his influence; men said his sympathies were with Prussia, and made many other untrue statements. The agitation against him was vehement and intense, giving to him deep pain and feelings of anguish to the Queen, who loved and trusted him utterly and completely.

But once again the wave of unpopularity was lived down, and men began to realise that in the Prince Consort they really had a man of exceptional ability and wisdom. Year by year, now, he gained a hold on the hearts of the English people—stronger than he himself knew, stronger than they knew—till he suddenly passed from their midst.

All his life he had toiled ceaselessly for England and the welfare of her people. "From the requirements of the largest hospital in London to the needs of the humblest labourer at the docks, nothing was too great or too small for his observation or his interest." He rose every morning at seven and the day was never long enough for all the work he wanted to do; but in the "strongest man there is only a limited power of endurance, and if he puts the work of eighty years into forty years there can be but one result."

So it was with the Prince Consort. The autumn of 1861 was spent in Scotland with the Queen and their nine children, the youngest of whom, Princess Beatrice, was but four years old. He had been unwell and over-tired for some time past and the quiet Highland home did not refresh him as much as usual.

The Royal Family returned to Windsor in November as usual. Among other State affairs, the Prince was specially troubled about a quarrel with America that brought this country "within a hair's-breadth of war." England felt that her flag had been gratuitously insulted and indignantly cried for redress. For a time the situation was an ugly one. The Prince—a lover of peace—had ever preached forbearance and forgiveness rather than unnecessary war.

On the night of November 30th the message from England to America on the subject of this insult was submitted to the Queen. The Prince read it and thought it was unwise. After a sleepless night, he rose early and wrote a fresh message for England to send. Wiser or more conciliatory words have seldom been composed. A few days later the writer was too ill to hold a pen.

As December advanced he grew worse, and typhoid fever developed. Medical science was yet backward and fevers were little understood. On December 11th the public were told that the Prince was suffering from "fever . . . likely to continue for some time." Suddenly it became fierce and wasting. The Prince was not equal to the strain; the struggle for life was too great, and he had no wish to live. His strength failed, and, holding the hand of her he loved so well, he passed away on December 14, 1861.

The solemn tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's told the English people that the husband, friend, and counsellor of Queen Victoria had passed "beyond this bourne of time and space."

A great hush fell on the nation, a wonderful wave of sorrow spread over the land, the shadow of death seemed to enter every home in England.

Men forgot the narrow jealousies, the unkind words, the unworthy attributes; they saw in him one who was generous, hard-working, single-hearted, and devoted—

> "A Prince indeed,
> Beyond all titles and a household name
> Hereafter, through all times, Albert the Good."

And on that solemn day when Queen Victoria died, forty years later, and her son ascended the throne under the title of Edward VII., he explained his reasons for not taking his father's name:

"I do not undervalue the name of Albert, which I inherit from my ever to be lamented father, who, by universal consent, is, I think, deservedly known by the name of Albert the Good, and I desire that his name should stand alone."

A groan of pity for the poor widowed Queen, left with nine fatherless children and all the cares of a growing realm, went up from all the people throughout her vast possessions.

> "Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
> Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
> Remembering all the beauty of that star
> Which shone so close beside Thee that ye made
> One light together, but has passed and leaves
> The Crown a lonely splendour."

XXVII

CANADIAN FEDERATION
(1867)

"The general ear is filled with Federation—ever wider burns the flame of Federation; ever wider and also brighter."—CARLYLE.

FOR a time the Queen, utterly heartbroken, took no part in public affairs, though she was ever mindful of her duty to her subjects at home. Those beyond the seas still attracted little attention, and an event of vast Imperial importance passed almost unnoticed by Britons at home.

Twenty-eight years had passed away since Lord Durham's famous Report * and the subsequent union of Upper and Lower Canada. The storms that had raged round the subject were silent, the statesman who laid the foundation of Canadian union had long since been laid in his quiet grave, while "Our Lady of the Snows," the land he had made loyal and free, was rapidly growing into an important nation.

The population had increased rapidly in Upper Canada, to which colony the Irish peasants had flocked after the terrible potato famine of 1845. Trade had doubled and trebled, new villages and

* See page 27.

towns had sprung up. Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Ottawa were important cities, and enterprising farmers were making their way farther and farther west. Colonists from the Old Country were clearing forests and growing wheat on virgin soil to the north, while the fur traders, who for the past two hundred years, had trading rights over enormous tracts of ice and snow, were pushed towards the inhospitable shores of Hudson's Bay.

From the Pacific Coast to the desolate shores of Labrador these old merchant-adventurers had roamed, buying the furry skins of wolves and foxes, bears and beavers, for sale in England and America. From many an isolated fort amid the great silences the flag of England flew bearing the magic letters H. B. C.

The cultivation of wheat was now found to be more valuable ; and gradually land was bought from the Hudson's Bay Company, and amid hardship and toil, in poverty and privation, individual men were reclaiming barren and desolate lands to bring them under cultivation. It is well to remember what our country owes to the plucky, persevering, resolute Britons who, far from home and friends, built up the Empire during the reign of Queen Victoria.

In 1858 the discovery of gold on the Pacific coast brought colonists in a rush from all parts of the world. Vancouver Island sprang into fame and the town of Victoria became the great commercial centre of gold-diggers. No longer could the Hudson's Bay Company minister to the growing needs of the colonists and England took over the West under the name of British Columbia.

In 1866, after years of unsuccessful toil, a cable was laid under the broad Atlantic Ocean. The deed was

finally accomplished by a British ship amid universal rejoicing. It can easily be understood how great was the moment when mutual congratulations were exchanged between the Mother Country and her daughter colony, a moment only surpassed when, after the Queen had passed away, England spoke to Canada by means of wireless telegraphy.

Canada was at an acute stage in her history just now. Her isolated provinces were thinking of uniting in imitation of the neighbouring United States of America. It was a matter of the gravest moment, and a few months after the laying of the submarine cable a famous Conference was held in the historic city of Quebec. It was composed of representatives from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and the already united Canadas. Men of ability, power, and eloquence, French Canadians, English Canadians, Irishmen, Scotsmen who had emigrated to the new country—all met to make this momentous decision for the country of their adoption.

Should they unite or should they not? For eighteen days they sat with closed doors discussing the future of their land, until at last they arrived at a scheme for uniting the great colonies of British North America, and from the realm of dreams federation became an accomplished fact. Upper Canada was henceforth known as Ontario and Lower Canada as Quebec, and the whole Federation to be known henceforth as the Dominion of Canada.

The new Federal Parliament was to consist of two Houses—a house of Commons with 181 representatives and a Senate of 72 life members, with a Governor-General sent out by England to watch over all Imperial interests. Thus the colonists made

themselves perfectly free to work out their own laws, to manage their own rapidly increasing trade, their taxes, and their defences.

As other provinces grew stronger they joined the Federation. Manitoba and the North-West territories and the old Hudson's Bay land came into the union in 1870, British Columbia and Vancouver in 1871, and Prince Edward Island in 1873, with representatives sitting in the central Parliament at Ottawa.

When all was complete, the Dominion of Canada stretched 3,000 miles from sea to sea. "The little British possession of 1759 described by the French as a few square miles of snow had grown till she was thirty times the size of the Mother Country."

Newfoundland—the oldest colony—preferred, and still prefers, to stand outside the federal union and to bear her burdens alone, in the same way that New Zealand remained outside the Australian Commonwealth thirty years later.

Canada has had her moments of wishing for separation and independence, but the cry of the blood has been strong and the links that bind her to the island-home have proved enduring.

> "Shall we not, thro' good and ill,
> Cleave to one another still?
> Britain's myriad voices call,
> 'Sons, be welded, each and all,
> Into one Imperial whole,
> One with Britain, heart and soul!
> One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne!'"

The Imperial idea had hardly taken shape in England, though there were those who regarded federation as part of a yet greater scheme.

"Self-government in distant colonies," said Benjamin Disraeli, "when it was conceded ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of Imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an Imperial tariff, by a military code . . . by which the colonies should have been defended and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the colonists themselves. It ought to have been accompanied by some representative Council in London, which would have brought the colonies into constant and continuous relations with the home Government."

XXVIII

THE WORK OF LORD BEACONSFIELD (BENJAMIN DISRAELI)

"Ah," said Coningsby, "I should like to be a great man."

"Nurture your mind with great thoughts. To believe in the heroic is to make heroes."—DISRAELI.

THE same year that saw the Federation of Canada found Benjamin Disraeli at the head of the Government in England. It will be well to get a clear idea of what he had already accomplished since his opposition to Free Trade in 1846.

"You will see," he had said emphatically as a young man,— "you will see I shall be Prime Minister."

"Something within me whispers that one day I shall be famous," he had said as a boy, when the idea of life without fame and power seemed intolerable.

Already he was a marked man by reason of his three novels, "Vivian Grey," "Coningsby," and "Sybil," the first of which represented his own political aspirations. But he suddenly leaped into fame in 1846, by his strenuous opposition to the repeal of the Corn Laws by Sir Robert Peel.*

* See page 60.

From this date onwards Disraeli, for the next twenty-eight years, was the sole pillar of the Tory Party. He and he alone led the Opposition against powerful Whig Governments, never disheartened, never hopelessly discouraged. During this long period he only held office three times. In 1852 he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, but his Budget was so vehemently attacked by Mr. Gladstone,* that the Tory Government fell. This was the beginning of that long duel between the two striking Victorian statesmen, Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone.

Through the long years that followed, Disraeli led the Opposition with skill and courage, struggling against a hostile majority in office, and with no men of genius on whom to rely in his own party.

The defeat of Lord Russell's Reform Bill at last brought Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli into power.

Reform was in the air. The First Reform Bill, giving the middle classes in England a vote in the government of their country, had been passed five years before the Queen's accession, before young Disraeli had obtained a seat in the House of Commons. The Chartists† had begged for votes, but nothing had been done. Lord Russell's Reform Bill was now defeated, but the working men of England would not be denied.

Crowded meetings were held in the large northern towns, riots occurred in Hyde Park, and seeing that some measure of reform was inevitable, Disraeli resolved on a "leap in the dark," even though he might be "stealing the Whigs' clothes while they were bathing."

The passing of the Reform Act of 1867 was one of Disraeli's greatest triumphs. He had to persuade

* See page 252. † See page 45.

his followers to support a measure they had condemned all their lives, to "educate his party" into doing the very thing they had once cordially denounced.

The Second Reform Act became law in 1867, by which householders in the United Kingdom were given the power of voting. But his term of office was short, and the following year found him once more thrown into the "cold shade of Opposition," while strong measures were passed by a strong Whig Government.

The tide turned at last, and at the age of seventy in 1874 Disraeli, for the first time in his life, became Prime Minister, with the entire command of a large Tory, or Conservative, majority. For the next six years he was in supreme power and one of the most striking figures in Europe. He had, as his wife expressed it, "climbed to the top of the greasy pole at last."

India at once claimed his attention. Whether he was an Imperialist at heart or not, he sought to draw closer the scattered possessions under one head.

"There must be no more annexation, no more conquest," he had exclaimed eighteen years before this in an expressive speech. "You ought at once to tell the people of India that the relation between them and their real ruler, Queen Victoria, shall be drawn nearer."

He proposed to cement the union by sending the Prince of Wales to India on a triumphal progress through the land as a representative of the Queen. No English Prince of Royal blood had as yet visited India, and the Prince was received with great enthusiasm by the loyal native princes. He was in the midst of his tour when a piece of news

was flashed through Europe, which was destined to have a far-reaching effect on Indian matters.

On November 26, 1875, it was suddenly announced that the British Government had bought the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal for four millions of money. Though nobody quite knew what it meant, the news was received by a very "trumpet of approval."

This is the story of one of the boldest strokes of policy in our history. The Suez Canal had been open about six years, the first spadeful of earth having been turned at Port Said in 1859. The wondrous engineering had been done by a Frenchman, M. Lesseps. England had played no part in the great enterprise. The Khedive of Egypt owned half the shares, the rest were mostly owned by Frenchmen. But the Khedive had got into money troubles, he owed large sums of money that he could not repay, and he wished to sell his shares in the Suez Canal. This wish reached the ears of a Mr. Greenwood, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette.* He named it at once to the Prime Minister, who saw at a glance that if any of the other Powers of Europe bought these shares, it might be very awkward for England.

There was not a moment to be lost, not even time to call a Cabinet meeting, but Benjamin Disraeli did not hesitate. He bought the Khedive's shares for four millions and England awoke to find herself in possession of half the Suez Canal. The sea route to India was now secure for ever through times of peace and war. The shares rose rapidly in value, the number of ships passing through the canal doubled and trebled year by year, and the canal had to be widened and deepened more than once.

The interest on these famous shares is a large item to-day in the revenue of our country.

The Prince's return from India was followed by a "Royal Titles Bill" by which the Queen was called "Empress of India," thereby adding "splendour even to her throne and security even to her Empire." From this time forwards she bore the great title "Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith and Empress of India." Henceforth she signed all documents "Victoria R. & I." (Regina & Imperatrix) and in 1893 the addition of "Ind: Imp." (Indiæ Imperatrix) was engraved on our English coinage.

"My lords," said Lord Beaconsfield six weeks before he died, "the key to India is in London. The majesty and sovereignty, the spirit and vigour, of your Parliament, the inexhaustible resources, the ingenuity and determination of your people—these are the keys to India."

This same year Disraeli made his last speech in the House of Commons of which he had been a member for thirty-nine years. He was now to pass into the House of Lords as the Earl of Beaconsfield. "What our duty is at this critical moment is to maintain the Empire of England—nor will we ever agree to any step that may hazard the existence of that Empire."

These were his last words as he passed from the scene of so many triumphs.

The "critical moment" was a renewal of the old Eastern question. The weakness of Turkey and the increase of Russian influence in the East was causing difficulty. Certain provinces had risen in revolt against Turkey's tyranny, and terrible atroci-

ties were reported in the English newspapers. Mr. Gladstone held England responsible and great excitement arose in the country. Indignation was at its height, when Lord Beaconsfield delivered one of his greatest speeches.

"We have nothing to gain by war," he said. "There are no cities and no provinces that we desire to appropriate. We have built up an Empire of which we are proud and our modest boast is this, that that Empire subsists as much upon sympathy as upon force. But if the struggle comes it should also be recollected that there is no country so prepared for war as England, because there is no country where resources are so great. In a righteous cause England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done."

This speech gave rise to the popular song—

"We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too."

The following April Russia declared war against Turkey, but it was not till 1878 that the vanquished Turks sued for terms of peace. Lord Beaconsfield was determined that these terms of peace should not be settled by Russia alone, but by a Conference of all the Powers. Accordingly a Conference was held at Berlin, under Prince Bismarck, at which Lord Beaconsfield represented England. For a time matters seemed to be drifting towards war, when the English representative won the day. Lord Beaconsfield explained England's demands. "If you accept these," he affirmed, "Peace; if not, War."

His courage lay in his knowledge that England was totally unprepared for war at this time.

His return from Berlin was nothing short of a triumphal progress through the streets of London. Amid tremendous enthusiasm he assured his fellow-countrymen that he had brought them "Peace with Honour."

No wonder Prince Bismarck, admiring the man's courage, was heard exclaiming, "Disraeli *is* England." This was his last work. In 1880 the country returned Mr. Gladstone to power and Lord Beaconsfield retreated to Hughenden, his country seat in Buckinghamshire. Here he wrote the last of his many novels, "Endymion."

The following year he died, at the age of seventy-seven, to the inexpressible grief of his "Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria." Like every statesman, he had his friends and his enemies. His friends planned and carried out the great organisation of the Primrose League, the fivefold petals being taken to indicate the five divisions of the British Empire—Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.

His political enemies owned that "none can deny his rare and splendid gifts or that he played a great part in British history," while Mr. Gladstone expressed the feelings of many, when he spoke of the death of Lord Beaconsfield as the "vanishing of some vast magnificent castle in an Italian romance."

To the end of his life he was an enigma.

"An adventurer, foreign in race, in ideas, in temper, without money or family connections, climbs, by patient and unaided efforts, to lead a great party, master a powerful aristocracy, sway a vast empire, and make himself one of the four or five greatest personal forces in the world . . . Whatever judgment history may ultimately pass upon him, she will find in the long annals of the English Parliament no more striking figure."

XXIX

THE MARCH TO MAGDALA
(1868)

"It is a privilege to belong to a country which has done such deeds. It will add lustre to the name of this nation, and will beneficially influence the future history of the world."—LORD BEACONSFIELD on the Abyssinian expedition.

THE Reform Bill of 1867 was popularly called "a leap in the dark." Another leap in the dark was now taken, when in the following year, an English expedition was sent into unknown Abyssinia.

It is difficult for a nation with various trade interests to watch in distant parts, to choose always the right man for the right place. Sometimes Englishmen abroad are not so tactful as might be, and troubles arise. This was the case with one of our consuls sent to Massowah on the Red Sea in 1862 to protect British trade with Abyssinia and the adjoining countries. He took presents from Queen Victoria to King Theodore, and was well received on his arrival. Now, the last consul had helped the king in his quarrels with his subjects—a proceeding which was objected to in England. The new consul had strict orders to hold aloof from all matters concerning the

king, who was a semi-barbaric savage. Theodore soon noticed a difference in the conduct of the new consul, and wrote to the Queen to beg for his dismissal. Owing to some oversight, the letter remained unanswered.

There was a story that at one time King Theodore wanted to marry the young Queen of England. However that may be, he now felt himself slighted, and took his revenge by seizing the consul and all other British subjects within his reach, including the traders and missionaries who were in his country. These were chained together, and led up to the great rock fortress of Magdala, in the very heart of the wild country.

As letters and messages failed to move the stony heart of Theodore, an official was sent with a stern message from the Queen, demanding the instant release of the captives. For months the messenger was kept at Massowah, till at last he was received by King Theodore, who played with him for awhile—now angry, now friendly—then turned and imprisoned him with the other captives. It was plain that force must now be used, for the unhappy prisoners—among whom were women and children—were treated with savage cruelty, and daily expected to be massacred. England now planned an expedition which, as Disraeli said, was "one of the most remarkable military enterprises of this century."

Sir Robert Napier, in command of some twelve thousand men, left Bombay in the new year of 1868, landing on the desolate shores of the Abyssinian coast early in January. No easy task lay before him. Not only was the country unknown, but it was very difficult of access. Four hundred miles of mountainous and almost trackless country lay in front of them

before they could reach the precipitous rock on which stood the fortress containing the helpless captives—four hundred miles, which had to be held by a chain of fortified posts and well guarded with troops for the return journey—four hundred miles, and probably fighting to do on the way.

All food supplies had to be carried, but personal sacrifices were cheerfully made by officers and men, the telegraph was carried forward, and the strange expedition started under a burning sun. Strange indeed they must have appeared to Abyssinian eyes. There were mules from Egypt, camels from Aden, and elephants from Bombay. But the men of the country were friendly enough, for they knew the English were going to rid them of their tyrant and oppressor, King Theodore. Never was road more varied—now the troops were marching across a burning plain, now over a lofty tableland, wild and barren; sometimes they were scorched by blazing sun, sometimes drenched to the skin by rain and cold sleet. Through the months of February and March they made their way laboriously but steadily onwards.

Meanwhile the captives at Magdala were in a sorry state. They knew not how long they had to live. From time to time they were visited by the king; sometimes he talked to them as a friend, sometimes he hinted to them of possible tortures and death. Sometimes he was in the highest spirits, boasting of the old fighting powers of the Abyssinians; sometimes he was brooding sadly over his possible fate as he received news of the steady advance of the English soldiers to the relief of their fellow-countrymen.

It was early in April when Sir Robert Napier and his men arrived before Magdala and fighting began. They

were attacked at four on the afternoon of the 10th by some five thousand Abyssinians under Theodore himself. The cavalry, dressed entirely in scarlet, dashed with tremendous spirit and courage on to the English troops. Rain was falling heavily at the time, and a tremendous thunderstorm added impressiveness to the scene.

But brave as they were, the barbaric soldiers of Theodore were no match for disciplined English troops; again and again they returned to the charge, and five hundred were killed and a thousand wounded before ever they consented to retire. Covering himself with his shield, Theodore had watched the defeat of his troops in mute despair. After brooding sleeplessly over the disasters of the day, he sent a message to the English: "I have been conquered by the advance guard alone. All my gunners are dead—reconcile me with your people."

"Your Majesty has fought like a brave man," answered Napier. "If, therefore, your Majesty will bring all the Europeans and deliver them safely this day in the British camp, I will guarantee honourable treatment for yourself and for all the members of your family."

Theodore set free his captives at once, and the little band of Europeans crept gladly from their perilous quarters to the English camp with their wives and children. But Theodore himself refused to surrender, and the English had no choice but to assault his stronghold of Magdala. Hearing of their determination, Theodore's courage for a moment failed.

"Warriors who love me," he cried, "gird yourselves; leave all behind and follow me; the time has come to seek another home."

But the soldiers refused—they would not flee from an enemy again, and the king returned heavily to his high fortress to prepare for the assault. The task before the British was a colossal one. Magdala was perched upon precipitous cliffs, and there were only two points, where narrow paths led up to a strong gateway, through which there was entrance to the fortress. The British soldiers were undaunted, though they knew not what strength might await them at the top. Up and up they climbed, while down the sheep-tracks they could see Theodore's unloyal subjects seeking refuge in the valleys below, till the storm above should be over.

It was midday before the English arrived at the summit. Had Theodore been supported by his soldiers, the capture would have been impossible, but he was almost deserted. The main gateway had been strongly fortified, but it was blown in by the advance guard, and soon the English were scrambling through. The first sight that met their eyes was the dead body of King Theodore, his gold brocaded mantle cast aside, lying in the doorway.

"Defeated and despairing, he had died in the high Roman fashion—by his own hand."

The English flag now flew from the heights of Magdala, the rock-bound fortress of King Theodore, so lately the prison-house of the British captives. The expedition had done its work.

The commander-in-chief thanked his troops in a memorable speech. "The remembrance of your privations will pass away quickly," he said. "Your gallant exploit will live in history."

In the House of Commons Disraeli and Gladstone united in thanking Sir Robert Napier, known to history as Lord Napier of Magdala. "In an age

accused, and perhaps not unjustly, of selfishness and a too great regard for material interests, it is something . . . for a great nation to have vindicated the higher principles of humanity. It is a privilege to belong to a country which has done such deeds."

XXX

IRISH AFFAIRS—THE FENIANS

"It is a long time we are waiting,
Weeping without ceasing and keening
With the hope the day will come at last
That the pain will be taken from us
That it is short until the coming of the Fenians."
—Irish Priest (seventeenth century).

WHILE these great deeds were being wrought by Englishmen abroad, the condition of Ireland was occupying attention at home.

The years that succeeded the Irish famine, were some of the saddest in the whole history of Ireland. Year by year the great emigrant ships bore Ireland's sons and daughters away to the United States, to start new homes in a land of plenty where English rule was not.

Time had not softened the feelings of the Irish for the Mother Country: she was still their enemy, the source of all their evils, the cause of all their hopeless despair. Across the great Atlantic they still nursed these revengeful feelings, and planned together how they might best worry England into giving them back their rights. They had fought gallantly, shoulder to shoulder, with the Americans in their Civil War of 1865, and when the war was over thousands

of Irishmen were thrown out of occupation with a good military training, which they were ready to turn against England.

A secret society, under the name of the Fenian Brotherhood, grew up on both sides of the Atlantic. The Fenians first made a raid on Canada, which was instantly crushed, while their efforts after a general rising in Ireland were as easily foiled. Nature herself seemed to be against them, for although it was March, and Ireland as a rule was singularly free from snow, it now fell ceaselessly day and night, blocking the mountain gorges where the Irish lay hidden. A few shots were fired and a few captures made, but the Fenian rebellion of 1867 was "buried in that unlooked-for snow."

An attempt to carry the rebellion into England failed also, though the Fenians succeeded in rescuing two of their party from a prison van on the way to the Manchester gaol by means of a cowardly murder, and in blowing open the wall of Clerkenwell Prison and injuring innocent people to set others of their brotherhood free. This show of rebellion created some excitement throughout the country, and citizens were sworn as special constables to keep the peace.

But if the rebellion itself fizzled out, the reasons for general discontent remained. Celt and Saxon could not understand one another, neither at this time did they make much effort in this direction.

"Come, let us to-night make a new treaty," said Mr. Bright, of anti-Corn Law fame, who was visiting Ireland. "On England's part let it stand for justice; on the part of Ireland let there be forgiveness."

"Justice to Ireland!" The cry was taken up by England, and well-intentioned men tried to remedy

past injustices, which had made Fenians of the Irish.

None saw more clearly the need of reform than Mr. Gladstone, who became Prime Minister in 1868, and from this time forward became champion of the Irish. His first act was to disestablish the Irish Church. These are hard-sounding words, but at this time the State Church was Protestant, as it is in England to-day. And as Ireland was emphatically a Roman Catholic country, only a fifth of the population belonged to the State Church.

With passionate devotion born of long centuries, the Irishman has ever been loyal to the Romish Church. Religion has played a large part in his melancholy and romantic life; hill, stream, and valley are peopled by mystic forms; angels still hover round glen and glade; dreamy legends and haunting visions create for him an unseen world. But it was the landlords—mostly Protestant—by whom the tithe rent-charge was paid.

"The Irish Church," cried Mr. Lowe, "is like an exotic brought from a far country—it is kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at vast expense in an uncongenial climate and an ungrateful soil. It has no leaves, puts forth no blossom, and yields no fruit. Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?"

His words expressed the feelings of the majority. The Bill became law in 1869.

This accomplished, Mr. Gladstone at once took up the Irish land question. The Irish peasant at this time was absolutely dependent on his landlord. Troubles arose between them; there were faults on both sides, but the tendency of the Government was to make residence in Ireland impossible to landlords. The new Irish Land Act gave the tenant the "right

of compensation" and other advantages. Men in England cried out that Gladstone was "steering straight upon the rocks." The Act passed into law in 1870, but far from settling the Irish question, it was but a signal for fresh disturbance and discontent.

Further misunderstanding arose between landlord and tenant, and Ireland was more unsettled than she had been for many years. Neither the Disestablishment of the Church nor the Land Act "put out at once the hot ashes of Fenianism," but it must be remembered that the bitterness of centuries is not cured by the passing of one or two laws.

XXXI

NATIONAL EDUCATION

"The fate of empires depends upon the education of youth."
—ARISTOTLE.

MR. GLADSTONE was still busy with Irish affairs, when the all-important subject of elementary education forced itself upon the nation. The Reform Bill of 1867, that "leap in the dark" taken by Lord Beaconsfield, had given birth to the famous words, "We must now at least educate our new masters."

A truly deplorable state of things had existed ever since the Queen's accession, and little had as yet been done to remedy it. Other countries had gone ahead in their systems of education; in New York one child in every three was being taught, in Germany one in every six, in England one in every fourteen. These were taught in dame schools, charity schools, Sunday schools, and schools built by various societies—most were under church or chapel with grants of money from the State.

A small band of Inspectors had been appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to look after these schools and report on them. These early reports show clearly enough the need for reform. No one

thought of healthy sites or surroundings in these early days. Chapels, barns, rag warehouses, kitchens, and even bedrooms were used as schools: some were dark, some were cold, some were damp, some were dirty.

Then again, the teachers were wholly hopeless—none were considered too old or too ignorant or too sickly to manage and teach young children. Some were domestic servants out of place, some were helpless cripples or consumptives, out-door paupers or old folk over seventy. Here is the report of an elementary school in 1869 as seen by an Inspector:—

"In a small low room in a back court were forty-four boys from four to fourteen. In the midst sat the master, a hopeless cripple, whose lower limbs were paralysed, and who could not stand upright. The boys formed a dense mass round him, swaying backwards and forwards, while he begged them feebly to make less noise. In a corner of the room his wife minded six or seven of the younger children. The boys read only from their Bibles, they wrote a little on broken slates, and only two of them could add up a simple sum."

The boys at the top of the school were known as "sixpenny boys," that being their school fee, the more backward were "fourpennies." The ordinary fee of threepence a week fell heavily on parents, whose wages were far lower than they are to-day.

It now became important that more schools should be built and better teachers trained to teach the fast growing population, for there was only accommodation for just half of England's poor children.

Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister and Mr. Forster was Minister of Education when the times seemed to

be ripe for further movement. The Education Bill of 1870 was an event of great importance in the Victorian era. Mr. Forster did not frame his Bill without personal knowledge of the English children. He would stop and talk to the ragged little urchins in the street, ask them about their lives and to what they were looking forward when they were grown men and women, and he usually turned away with wet eyes and a heart wrung with pity for their hopeless lots.

The new Bill proposed a system of State schools to be established in those parts where the Church, with all its enthusiasm for religious teaching, had been unable to provide enough accommodation for the fast growing population. The new schools were to be under School Boards composed of local men and women with some knowledge of their neighbourhood and its wants.

"Let each of us think of our own homes," said Mr. Forster as he introduced his famous Education Bill, "of the villages in which we have to live, of the towns in which it is our lot to be busy, and do we not know child after child growing up in probable crime — either badly taught or utterly untaught? Dare we, then, take on ourselves the responsibility of allowing this ignorance and this weakness to continue one year longer than we can help?"

The Bill passed, and all over the land, chiefly in the large cities, airy schools were built until every child in the land could find a place. Before the Queen's death the School Boards, that had done good work for over thirty years, gave their work over to the County Councils, and the schools became known as Council Schools.

Still school attendance was irregular, so another step was taken in 1876, making it compulsory for a child to attend school up to the age of twelve, which age was raised later to fourteen.

In 1891 another important step was taken. Mr. Goschen, one of the most famous financiers of modern times, had a surplus from spirit duties, and this sum of money he set apart in order to relieve the parents of their school fees. From this date elementary education has been given free to every child in the country. And yet, nothing has been more strange in the whole history of education, than the indifference of parents to the training of their children.

Education means to "lead out," not to "cram in." For a time the authorities as well as the parents of England lost sight of this. The early Board Schools turned out boys and girls all modelled on the same lines, crammed with a certain amount of knowledge rather than with characters trained for the work of the world.

But England learnt by bitter experience. Ruskin did not cry aloud in vain that to read and write and spell is not to be educated.

"Can they plough, can they sow, can they plant at the right time or build with a steady hand? Is it the effort of their lives to be chaste, knightly, faithful, holy in thought, lovely in word and deed?"

To fight an age of materialism Nature study was taught. "Not a bird should fly unnoticed, not a song should sound, not a wing be moved without appealing to seeing eyes and hearing ears—so would tens of thousands, using happy eyes, find delight in common things."

"Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all the secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter.
Talked with them, whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Chickens.'

Of all beasts, he learned the language
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers.'"

England now seeks to train her children to the daily work of their lives, so that they may be clean, obedient, kind, honest, and industrious citizens, interested in the welfare of their fellows at home and beyond the seas. To gain knowledge is to gain power, and for such as these, there are responsible positions at home and abroad.

Lastly, true education helps to raise the whole taste of the community, to enable children to distinguish between what is beautiful and what is sordid, to enjoy what is healthy rather than what is vulgar, to read the works of great men rather than degrading literature.

It teaches them to keep their bodies in health, their minds content in the knowledge that there is no wealth but life, "life including all its powers of love, joy, and admiration."

For "he only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into Living Peace. And the men who have this life in them are the true lords and kings of the earth—they and they only."

XXXII

WOMEN'S EDUCATION

"But in the shadow will we work and mould
The woman to the fuller day."—TENNYSON.

THE education of England's children was a great step forward in the progress of the century, but the education of her women was equally important; indeed, it has proved a momentous change in the great Victorian era, and its far-reaching results are agitating the statesmen of to-day.

In early Victorian days a girl's education consisted in making her attractive and accomplished in order that she might marry well, for few other careers were open at this time to women.

She was, as Mrs. Browning says, doomed to

"A sort of cage-bird life, born in a cage,
Accounting that to leap from perch to perch
Was act and joy enough for any bird."

Thus, instead of the free games played by the girls of to-day, instruments of torture were used to mould her form. There were pulleys with weights for her neck, backboards of wood strapped to her

wrist, steel collars, and numerous other artificial arrangements. She was taught on a system of questions and answers by an ignorant governess, some single woman who had to make her own livelihood by this only possible means. Thus Charlotte Brontë went out teaching, her father, a Yorkshire "incumbent," being too poor to support his large family. No qualifications were necessary beyond the will to teach.

But, as the years rolled on, parents required more of the governess who was engaged to teach the girls everything, including piano, singing, dancing, deportment, the use of the globes, the Creed, and the Catechism. Public opinion demanded that the governess should be taught herself.

So in 1846 the Governess' Benevolent Association (founded to help these struggling teachers) started lectures for their instruction, examinations to test their knowledge, and granted certificates when a certain standard of efficiency had been reached.

Two years later a college was started, named after the young Queen—Queen's College. It met the want of the moment; two hundred women at once entered and eagerly attended lectures given by English professors. Among the keenest of these young students were Miss Beale and Miss Buss, who worked ceaselessly for the better education of women throughout the Victorian era.

Meanwhile, Florence Nightingale was opening up a new profession for women. By her quiet organisation, her skill, her courage, she had shown the world how much better was nursing in the hands of women than in the rougher, if willing, hands of men. She started a Training Home for nurses, and the movement grew and grew throughout the reign of

Victoria, till nursing was acknowledged as a woman's profession.

But popular opinion was still against the higher education of women, and when in 1866 the bold idea of a residential college for women occurred to Miss Emily Davies, there was a great outcry. Women might learn to sew and cook, dance and sing, but their minds must remain uncultivated. Their almost pathetic demand for education, employment, and a share of work as citizens of their island home was denounced as "unwomanly and degrading."

In vain did the Poet Laureate show the added strength and beauty of the homes of England if the minds of women were further developed—

> "Everywhere
> Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
> Two in the tangled business of the world,
> Two in the liberal offices of life."

He realised while the storm was yet raging over the vocation of women—

> "In the long years liker must they grow,
> The man be more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness and in moral height
> * * * * *
> She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care
> Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind
> Till at the last she set herself to man
> Like perfect music unto noble words."

But the age was ripening, and Miss Davies started her college, where women could take a three years' course of study. She hoped to see them take degrees at Cambridge equal with men,

but women had not yet obtained these at the death of Queen Victoria. Slowly and steadily the movement grew. Girton College, Cambridge, was followed by Newnham; while at Oxford, Somerville, Lady Margaret's, and St. Hilda's, sprang up one by one.

Hundreds of women qualified for degrees, they passed examinations equal to men; one woman obtained higher marks than the Senior Wrangler of one year, and another was placed above the Senior Classic. Still degrees were denied them.

At last the London University opened its doors to women, and conferred degrees upon them.

Meanwhile girls' schools were springing up all over the country. High Schools were established in all the large towns in the British Isles, where England's daughters could receive a good education — such as her sons had received for generations past. Scholarships were founded enabling girls to go to college, and the teaching profession thus became an acknowledged and noble career for women. With all this training of their faculties came greater ability and independence. Women began to seek other professions besides those of nursing and teaching.

In 1859 the first Englishwoman had gained a medical diploma, thirty-six years later 250 women were fully qualified doctors.

Gradually the need of women in the State was recognised. They were appointed on Royal Commissions, they served in the Post Office, they were made Inspectors, they sat on the first School Boards, they were made Guardians under the Poor Law. Since 1888 certain women (householders) have had votes for the County Councils,

but at the death of Queen Victoria they could not sit on these bodies.

In New Zealand women have had the Parliamentary vote since 1893, and in South Australia since 1894.

Such, briefly, has been the awakening of women during the reign of Queen Victoria. Beaten down by the convention of past ages, women fought quietly step by step for their liberty right through the century, and the new century dawned on an Empire, whose women were more full of courage, healthier, happier, freer than perhaps in any other nation upon the earth.

XXXIII

IN SOUTH AFRICA
(1867–1881)

"For forty years I have always regarded the South African question as the one great unsolved problem of our colonial system."
—GLADSTONE (1881).

WHILE women were seeking wider freedom at home, men were fighting to protect their possessions in South Africa. It is curious how a single event sometimes seems to alter the whole course of history. The sudden discovery of precious stones in parts of South Africa attracted all eyes to that country, and colonists and adventurers flocked to her shores from all parts of the world.

In 1867 a little Dutch child was found playing with a brilliant pebble given to him by a native boy from the Orange River. It was discovered to be a diamond worth £500! Two years later, a Dutch farmer gave £400 for a famous diamond known as the "Star of South Africa"; it was sold later for nearly thirty times that sum.

When this became known, a rush was made for the banks of the Vaal River by hundreds of adventurers, and the quiet, pastoral life of the Dutch colonists was turned into a feverish search for riches. A new

town—Kimberley—sprang up in the midst of the diamond fields, and a new era opened in South Africa. Up to this time the Orange Free State had claimed the adjoining country north of Cape Colony, called Griqualand West. It was bought from them by England, in 1876.

A year later the Transvaal was, somewhat unexpectedly, annexed to the British possessions in South Africa with a declaration that "so long as the sun shone the Transvaal would remain British territory." England had thus interposed with the idea of helping the Dutch farmers, or Boers, against their fierce neighbours, the Zulus, who threatened to overrun the country. For a time after the annexation there was peace.

Then Cetewayo, King of the Zulus, grew aggressive and threatened Natal. England peremptorily ordered him to disband his forces within a month.

Thirty days passed and there was no answer. Then (it was January, 1879) the British forces, consisting of English soldiers, colonists, and Basutos, crossed the Tugela river and entered the land of the Zulus, little thinking they were to sustain one of the few great defeats in the modern history of the Empire.

Although the fierce fighting power of the Zulus was well known, the English commander, Lord Chelmsford, underrated their strength, when he moved out of camp at Isandhlwana with the bulk of his force, bound for Cetewayo's capital, Ulundi, leaving some thirteen hundred men, half of them being whites, in an unfortified camp. Down into that camp suddenly burst some fifteen thousand Zulu warriors, who had evaded Lord Chelmsford.

In vain our men stood back to back, firing on

their savage foes; so long as ammunition lasted they fought with all the courage of despair. The Zulus fell thick, but they "dashed against the few white troops, as the breaking of the sea against a rock." At last the white men were overwhelmed.

"Fix bayonets and die like British soldiers"—thus rang out the last command, and almost to a man—they died.

When Lord Chelmsford returned towards evening, he found fifty officers and a thousand men stretched dead on the field of Isandhlwana, while guns, rifles, wagons, oxen, and stores had been carried off by the Zulus. It seemed now as if nothing could prevent the triumphant Zulus from entering the fair garden colony of Natal. But between Zululand and Natal rolled the River Tugela, only to be crossed at one point known as Rorke's Drift.

The defence of this ford by a handful of English soldiers, has been called one of the finest achievements of the century. For here some hundred men under two young English officers held the fort in the face of fearful odds, right through the long evening and night succeeding the Battle of Isandhlwana.

Hearing that a large body of Zulus were hastening towards the river, they prepared to defend the ford at all costs. They made parapets with bags of "mealies" and biscuit boxes, and they were hardly ready when swarms of Zulu warriors had begun to storm their defences. From behind their parapet the little band of heroes held the Drift; night fell and found them still fighting for it, till at last about four o'clock next morning, at the approach of Lord Chelmsford's column, the Zulus gave up and fled, leaving some four hundred dead bodies on the field. So the British saved Natal, redeemed their prestige

after the recent defeat, and made the obscure ford of Rorke's Drift immortal.

Despite this, the Zulu power remained unbroken. Further preparations were made, and the Battle of Ulundi at last ended the Zulu War. Cetewayo was taken prisoner, and a few years later Zululand was annexed to the Empire, as part of the Colony of Natal.

Unfortunately, a royal Prince—the heir of the Napoleons—fell a victim while fighting for the English in this war. Wishing to gain some experience in modern warfare and to fight under the British flag, the young Prince Imperial of France had sailed with the forces. But when reconnoitring one day with a small band of English, he was overtaken by Zulus and slain, to the endless grief of his widowed mother, the Empress Eugénie, widow of Napoleon III., second Emperor of the French.

But though the Zulus had been vanquished, further trouble was brewing for the English in South Africa. Relieved of all anxiety concerning Zulu raids on their borders, the Boers of the Transvaal now resolved to assert once more their independence. They had never liked annexation to the Empire under which they had lived since 1877, so in 1880 a deputation under Paul Krüger, Pretorius, and Joubert, three leading Boer commandants, went to England with a long list of citizens begging for a renewal of their independence.

These messengers now learnt something of party politics in London. If under Lord Beaconsfield, the Conservative Prime Minister, their land had been annexed, there was every chance that this policy would be reversed by Mr. Gladstone, who was now Liberal Prime Minister. But for the moment Glad-

stone was firm in his refusal to allow the Transvaal entire independence.

The Boer leaders returned home determined to fight for their land again. On December 16, 1880, they removed the Union Jack from Pretoria, hoisted the Dutch flag, and proclaimed the independence of the Transvaal.

A general rising of Boers followed, the English in Pretoria were surrounded by a rebel force, and various detachments of British troops were besieged in their garrisons. Sir George Colley, Governor of Natal, led a body of troops to the relief of these. But his way was barred by a strong contingent of Boers at Laing's Nek, the entrance of the pass over the Drakensberg, leading from Natal to the Transvaal. Here Colley was repulsed with heavy losses, and a few days later, on the heights of Ingogo, he was again beaten back by the Boers.

Smarting under failure and defeat, eager to retrieve his fortunes, he now planned for the ascent of Majuba Hill, from which splendid position he expected to crush the Boers once and for all. "At dead of night with some four hundred men, he left the British camp and began the long, laborious climb up the mountain side. Dawn was breaking when they reached the top. Rising high above the ridges of Laing's Nek, Majuba Hill commanded the surrounding country.

"Below them lay the Boer camp. It was Sunday morning. Suddenly the Boers discovered the British soldiers in their red coats standing against the sky line on the summit of Majuba. At first it seemed as if their position was hopeless; then some of the bravest among them offered to climb the hill and dislodge the English from their stronghold.

"Undaunted and unopposed, they climbed upwards, taking cover as they went. It was one of the finest deeds ever attempted, and the personal bravery of the Boers was beyond all praise. But so secure did the English feel on the summit of Majuba that they had prepared no defences.

"Suddenly the small Boer detachment stood at the top pouring a deadly fire upon the astonished British troops. Utterly demoralised, the British forces broke and fled down the steep sides of the mountain. Sir George Colley was shot at once and the tragedy was complete."

And now a curious thing happened. Mr. Gladstone wished for peace, so he gave the Transvaal back to the Boers, who joyfully proclaimed their independence. But even this did not solve for ever the problem of the Transvaal. In 1852 the State had been given independence, in 1877 that independence had been taken away, in 1881 it was again given, and soon after the Queen's death it was again taken away.

XXXIV

CECIL RHODES AND RHODESIA

"Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."—JOEL.

IT was about this time that a young Englishman was making his unique personality felt in South Africa. Cecil Rhodes—one of our greatest Empire-builders—a name closely connected with all that was vital in that land, had come out from England in 1870 at the age of seventeen, when the voyage to Durban yet took seventy days. He had made his way to the diamond fields about Kimberley, where he not only succeeded in regaining his failing health, but in making a fortune by his industry, foresight, and prudence.

The new land fascinated him. Ever a "dreamer of dreams," he planned out his life as a ruler of men in the land of his adoption. So matured were these that, in 1877 he unrolled a map of Africa, for which all the European nations were now scrambling, and pointing from the Cape to the great River Zambesi, "That's my dream," he cried—"all this to be English."

"I dream my dream, by rock and heath and pine,
Of Empire to the northward. Ay, one land
From Lion's Head to Line!"

As he rode over the vast unfurrowed tracts of unpopulated country, he saw the value of it to his already over-full island home. The wealth he was acquiring was a means to an end, and that end was a great united South Africa under British rule. Rudyard Kipling has summed up the aims of Cecil Rhodes—

> "Dreamer devout, by vision led
> Beyond our guess or reach,
> The travail of his spirit bred
> Cities in place of speech.
> So huge the all-mastering thought that drove—
> So brief the term allowed—
> Nations, not words, he linked to prove
> His faith before the crowd."

Having decided once for all on his course of action, he spared neither himself nor his money to achieve his end.

In 1889 a British South Africa Company was formed, with Cecil Rhodes as guiding spirit and Managing Director, in order to open up the yet unexplored lands lying at the back of beyond.

Bechuanaland, for the past five years, had been under British protection, to the annoyance of the Transvaal Boers, who were now trying to get a footing in Matabeleland. Germans and Portuguese were also advancing toward the hinterland. Already, thanks to Rhodes's foresight, a treaty had been made with the great native chieftain Lo-Bengula to whom Matabeleland and Mashonaland were subject—a treaty by which the English practically had the refusal of these vast tracts of land which to-day we call Rhodesia.

It was now thought desirable for some white men

to go up to Mashonaland and exploit the goldfields there. So some two hundred British colonists with a force of five hundred armed police set forth in the summer of 1890 to pioneer their roadless way into the new lands. Though missionaries and hunters had passed through the land, it was as yet unknown. Savage warring tribes were living in the thick bush, through which the "Mashonaland Pioneers" had to fight their way. Every night great precautions were taken: the camp was made of ox-wagons with a Maxim gun at each corner, while an electric searchlight illumined the dark night, and kept the terrified natives at a safe distance.

And so, under the guidance of Selous, the famous lion-hunter, who knew the region better than any white man living, the pioneers reached the very heart of Mashonaland. They hoisted the British flag at a spot near Mount Hampden, which they named Salisbury after the Prime Minister at home. Here they disbanded, for they had reached the promised land of the goldfields. They soon built the towns of Salisbury and Victoria, and more and more settlers found their way to the new country. A Chartered Company was formed, administered by Cecil Rhodes and his friend Dr. Jameson, and the whole was brought under British protection.

But all this displeased Lo-Bengula, and frequent Matabele raids disturbed the peace of the Mashonaland colonists. At last Jameson decided that the power of Lo-Bengula must be crushed.

In 1893 an opportunity offered. A Matabele army crossed the border and colonists and troops were called out to war. Some thousand rallied round the flag and marched towards Buluwayo, Lo-

Bengula's capital. They crossed the Matoppo Hills, and were making for the Shangani River, when they were attacked by a force of Matabele warriors some five thousand strong. These were driven back and the English marched on, only to be attacked again by a yet larger force.

The unhappy Matabele War was now in full swing. But the superior weapons of the British prevailed and the few once more beat the many. Then the Matabele set fire to the capital, and with Lo-Bengula, panic-stricken, they all fled northwards, leaving Buluwayo in the hands of the English once and for ever.

But Dr. Jameson felt that as long as the king lived, there would be no peace, so he sent a small force under Major Forbes to pursue and capture him if possible. No time was to be lost, and Major Forbes started off in haste. He followed the tracks of Lo-Bengula's wagons for some forty miles to the Shangani River, then along the river to a ford which had evidently been crossed. Major Forbes then deputed Major Alan Wilson with thirty-three troopers to cross the Shangani and patrol further, intending to follow later with the main body.

The night was dark and rain fell heavily. The river rose and with it all possibility of return. Wilson and his handful of men were hopelessly separated from Major Forbes. A terrible tragedy was the result.

The Matabele were rallying round their king, when they discovered the white men. In the early morning Major Wilson and his thirty-three troopers were furiously attacked. They knew full well there was no escape, but that they must die as became

brave men facing certain death. The handful of Englishmen fell back on a large mound. Here they dismounted and formed a ring with their horses, behind which they took shelter. There was no request for quarter, no thought of surrender. With "iron calmness" the men fought on for two long hours till their ammunition gave out. As soon as the supreme moment came, those who were yet able to rise stood shoulder to shoulder and lifted their hats. Then, said the Matabele afterwards—then they joined in a song, possibly "Floreat Etona" and singing, died. Still one man was left, upright, brave to the end. Alone he stood in the midst of the dead bodies of his comrades, a hero among heroes, and single-handed he fought the foe, till he too fell dead at the last.

The desperate bravery of Wilson's patrol struck the natives with awe and reverence.

The enthusiastic words of a brave old warrior of Lo-Bengula's royal regiment showed that the desperate courage of these Englishmen had not been in vain.

"Men of men they were," he cried, "whose fathers were men of men before them. They fought and died together; those who could have saved themselves chose to remain and die with the others. You did not think that white men were as brave as Matabele: now you must see that they were men indeed, to whom you are but as timid girls."

To-day the spot where they fell is marked by a granite memorial put up by Cecil Rhodes himself; but the brave end of the Shangani patrol will ever stand out, not only in colonial but in Imperial history, as one of England's famous deeds, "men

of men" indeed, "whose fathers were men of men before them"—

> "Heirs no more of others' glory
> But the makers of their own."

Thus Mashonaland and Matabeleland both came under British protection and were administered by the Chartered Company, under Dr. Jameson, under the name of Southern Rhodesia—which together with Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and Orange River Colony forms the fifth of the British States in South Africa.

XXXV

IN EAST AFRICA
(1863–1901)

"That where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too."—DISRAELI.

IT is strange to look back to the early Victorian days, and to realise that the vast tract of country, the "large and sunlit land," known to-day as British East Africa was then an unmapped country. Only gradually, from accounts brought home by explorers, did England realise that away to the south of the Egyptian Sudan, beyond and around the great lakes of Victoria and Albert Nyanza, lay a beautiful land, healthy, fertile, civilised, where white men could live and thrive.

This discovery was not made till 1862, when Queen Victoria had already lived through the happiest part of her own life, and had just been left a widow with nine fatherless children.

Speke, the weary and worn explorer, who had met the Bakers* at Gondokoro after his famous discovery of Victoria Nyanza, had been the first white man in Uganda. Though Arab traders had tried to stop him, he had bravely made his way to the swarthy King of Uganda, Mtesa by name,

* See page 141.

who received him with great delight. He was enchanted with the beauty of the country, its great dense forests, its high plateaux and fresh Highland air, its fertile soil, its picturesque river swamp choked with papyrus fringed with dense undergrowth. Here, too, he found an advanced civilisation compared with the southern regions through which he had passed. Coming from the naked savages south of the Equator, he found the people of Uganda so fully clothed that they actually thought Speke's donkey was "indecent without trousers"!

The next white man to visit Uganda was Stanley, in 1874, who was warmly received by King Mtesa. Stanley was struck, as had been Speke before him, by the intelligence of the king, and he set to work to teach him the Christian religion of the English.

"I see in Mtesa the light that shall lighten the darkness of this benighted region," he wrote home. Notwithstanding their civilisation, the whole country was worked upon slavery. Mercy and pity were almost unknown; children were tortured, their parents massacred and all groaned together under the oppression and tyranny of native rulers.

In answer to Stanley's urgent request, pioneer missionaries were sent out to Uganda from England. They were followed by a party of French Roman Catholics. The early days of Christianity in this part of the world were stormy indeed. Protestants and Roman Catholics strove for the mastery, till in 1884 Mtesa died, and was succeeded by one of his 150 children, Mwanga, who hated all missionaries.

And so, when Bishop Hannington—the first Bishop of Equatorial Africa—appeared in his kingdom he

was murdered with forty of his fellows, and forty native converts were burned.

Meanwhile the Germans were treating with the chiefs in Uganda, and it was time for the English to take some action. So in 1889 the British East Africa Company was started, and by agreement with Germany formed a Protectorate over the fair land of Uganda—the "Pearl of Africa," "a land worth loving" as Stanley had said.

Not only over Uganda did the East Africa Company hold sway, but over a great tract of country lying between the Nile and the sea, some seven hundred miles in extent, until their whole Protectorate was some seven times the size of the British Isles. The great seaport and harbour on the coast was Mombasa, where Captain (afterwards Sir Frederick) Lugard landed when he accepted service under the Imperial East Africa Association.

A strong man was sorely needed to take the lead in this newly found country, which was in a critical stage of its existence. Captain Lugard was engaged on building a series of small huts from the coast inland, when his work was suddenly stopped, and he received orders to start off to Uganda, where there was great unrest. Two months' hard marching through unknown land brought the little expedition under Captain Lugard to the borders of Uganda, where it was stopped by the River Nile. Finding two native canoes, the men cheerily paddled backwards and forwards till all were over. But their position was very insecure, and a general massacre of Europeans was pending.

Holding his life in his hand, but with heroic and fearless courage, Lugard appeared before the king. He at once made it clear that the whole country

was now under British protection. On Christmas Eve he presented a treaty to this effect to be signed by Mwanga. The king was full of fears, but he was about to sign, when angry voices arose, and amid the clicking of rifles and the cocking of guns it was announced that every man who signed the treaty would be shot. Lugard was wise enough to leave matters alone for the moment. He left the King's court with the treaty yet unsigned. No rest that night was possible. Drums were beating, and angry voices cried that there would be a massacre of Englishmen next day.

It was Christmas Day; the situation was very grave. Lugard again approached the king, again armed men with rifles appeared, and amid ill-suppressed jeers of insolent courtiers he turned back. But such courage had its deserved reward; next day the treaty was signed without further trouble. The Englishman had won the day.

It was some time before the country was restored to peace. The occupation was costing a great deal of money, and the East Africa Company had almost decided to give it up, when Sir Gerald Portal, who was acting at Zanzibar, was sent to inquire further into the matter. He was far-sighted enough to see the value of the land; he urged the retention of the whole country from hills to coast and the construction of a railway to connect the two.

In 1894 the English Government took over the rights of the Company, and an East African Protectorate was proclaimed. A new era opened with the construction of the now famous Uganda Railway, which runs from Mombasa to the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza. By this means the produce of

the interior can be carried to the coast, and the beautiful island of Zanzibar, over which a British Protectorate was proclaimed under the Sultan in 1890, acts as a great warehouse or distributing centre to the East Coast.

Thus a country nearly twice the size of the United Kingdom passed under the protection of the Queen, to be ruled by her subjects with justice and equity.

XXXVI

INDIAN FRONTIERS

"Across the world you keep the pride,
Across the world we mark the score."—NEWBOLT.

SINCE the terrible days of the Mutiny the history of England's rule in India had been uneventful. It had been a time of quiet development; no further territory had been annexed, railways had been laid down, canals cut, and the telegraph linked town with town, village with village, and the whole country with England.

The old East India Company had been dead for nearly twenty years when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India * at a magnificent Durbar held at Delhi, in January, 1877. It was the first great gathering in India attended by native princes, rulers, and chiefs since the days of English sway. Brilliant and gorgeous was the scene, like an "immense Eastern garden in full bloom."

Each chief came on his own royal elephant, which was arrayed in gorgeous trappings, with a throne of gold on its back. To each was presented a golden banner and medal bearing the new legend "Victoria, Empress." Representing the Great Queen beyond the Seas was the English Viceroy, who impressed on

* See page 158.

the great assembly of natives how the country had progressed under British rule.

But dark war clouds were gathering, and the cheers from the Durbar had hardly died away when "thunders moaning in the distance" were heard. Once more the old Afghan question had cropped up. Was Russian influence to dominate the Amir of Afghanistan or English? He had just received a Russian envoy at Kabul. The English now extorted a promise that he would likewise receive an English Resident. To this the Amir agreed, and Sir Louis Cavagnari was sent to Kabul.

One July day in 1879 he rode into the royal city, attended by a small escort. Before six weeks had passed he was dead. The history of 1841 had repeated itself in every grim detail, and the innocent representative of England's interests had been cut to pieces by the Afghans.

Punishment was necessary, and within four days a campaign had been planned. The leader was Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord) Roberts. He had been through the great Mutiny, earned the Victoria Cross and rapid promotion; he had served in the Abyssinian expedition (1868) and carried home the despatches. He had won the hearts of officers and men, who had already nicknamed him "Bobs" in their enthusiastic admiration. He was now to save England's honour in Afghanistan. Leaving Simla on September 6 (1879), he fought his way to Kabul in some thirty-six days. The terrified Amir at once gave himself up, and he was sent as a prisoner to India.

Meanwhile several claimants to the throne had arisen; the English were supporting the claims of Abdur Rahman, the eldest grandson of the famous Dost Mahomed, when suddenly another claimant

appeared in the neighbourhood of Kandahar, where the British forces were stationed. Hearing the approach of Afghan troops, General Burrows marched forth from Kandahar toward Maiwand on the River Helmund, to hold that place against the foe. But suddenly a huge Afghan force, well armed and shouting with triumph, charged down on the little British force, which was but 2,300 strong.

If the English commander had blundered, the blunder was retrieved by splendid heroism, unsurpassed in the history of our own times, when the famous 66th were nearly annihilated. Rallying again and again in the face of overwhelming odds, they at last formed a square, and, fighting back to back, they died almost to a man. The native troops fighting for England fled, and the disaster was complete. Nearly a thousand men were killed that day, and over their dead bodies the victorious Afghan army hastened on to Kandahar, where the little garrison was soon besieged.

Two days later this woful news was flashed to Sir Frederick Roberts at Kabul. He at once offered to march to Kandahar in order to relieve the garrison and wipe out the disgrace of Maiwand.

The famous march of 10,000 men from Kabul to Kandahar, a distance of 320 miles, under Sir Frederick Roberts, will always live in the history of our country, to inspire many another such deed of daring. On August 8, 1880, a start was made. Speed being the main object, the guns were carried on mules, and every man marched as light as possible through the roadless region. The enthusiastic leader reckoned on reaching Kandahar by the end of the month; he achieved this without the loss of a single man in twenty-three days.

All this time there was silence, and the British public held its breath as day after day of that long month of August wore on and there was no news, till suddenly "Bobs" and his men emerged from the silence just in time to save Kandahar. The besiegers were soon scattered and the second Afghan war was ended. Abdur Rahman now became Amir of Afghanistan, and the English retreated to Quetta, which has since been occupied by a British garrison as a frontier city.

But while peace was reigning on the western borders of India after restless years, on the eastern borders there was trouble brewing. True there were those at home who wished to see some annexation in Afghanistan, but this had been strongly opposed by a Liberal Government at home. Now, however, India was again to enlarge her boundary and give protection to a country considerably larger than the British Isles.

As far back as 1852 Lower Burma had been annexed to the British Empire, and from that time onward an era of prosperity had dawned; land had been brought under cultivation, and justice had been administered. But in 1878 a new king, Thebaw, succeeded to the throne of Upper Burma, and relations became strained. A massacre of forty princes and princesses ushered in the new reign, news of which was received with horror by all civilised nations. Further King Thebaw began intrigues with the French, who were near neighbours since their conquest of Tonking in 1884. Thebaw resented interference, he insulted the British Resident at Mandalay, and soon it became evident that the matter must be settled by force.

Late in the year 1885 Thebaw called on the

Burmese to join him in "driving the English into the sea."

Then and not till then, England took steps. General Prendergast with a fleet of flat-bottomed boats and an army of men invaded Upper Burma. There was an old Burmese prophecy which said, "The Great Mother cometh over the sea." When the Burmese heard that England was sending an army they said among themselves, "The Great White Queen is coming at last." But they took no steps to protect their city or their king.

"On the road to Mandalay
Where the old flotillas lay
Can't you hear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?"

The English expedition reached the royal city with little opposition. King Thebaw and his queen awaited the British in the palace gardens; they intended to make peace, but they were anxious and distraught. The maidens of the Burmese court were dancing before them to divert their minds from impending ruin, the royal elephants stood near, laden with treasure and ready for flight.

The British force arrived and surrender was demanded—surrender of the Burmese king and his kingdom within the next twenty-four hours. The blow had fallen. It was too late to escape. King Thebaw was hurried into a bullock-cart with scant ceremony, his queen was thrust into another, and in the sight of a weeping and awestruck crowd of Burmese the royal pair were conveyed to a steamer on the Irawadi.

Here a guard of British soldiers was drawn up:

they presented arms on the appearance of the royal prisoners. As their bayonets flashed in the sunlight, the king was seized with terror. "They will kill me," he cried wildly; "save my life!" His queen was braver. She strode on erect, her little child clinging to her dress, fierce and dauntless to the last. So the King and Queen of Burma were exiled to Ceylon, and Upper Burma was annexed to the Indian Empire.

It was some years before a settled government was established, and four years elapsed before the land could be administered on the same lines as the rest of British India.

The first railway was soon laid between Rangoon and Mandalay, telegraph wires connected the outlying parts, trade grew by leaps and bounds, and Burma entered on a period of prosperity and justice she had never known before—

"Peace in thy utmost borders, and strength on a road untrod."

XXXVII

AFFAIRS IN IRELAND

"Yet, reading all thy mournful story,
Thy children, with a mystic faith sublime,
Turn to the future, confident that Fate,
Become at last thy friend, reserves for thee
To be thy portion in the coming time
They know not what—but surely something great."—INGRAM.

SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS had just accomplished his famous march from Kabul to Kandahar, and the annexation of Burma was under consideration, when England found herself face to face with one of the most formidable situations ever developed, even in Ireland.

Following on the Irish Land Act had come the Land League, with "The Land for the People" as its cry. This cry had grown louder and louder as the years rolled onward. It gathered weight, it widened its scope, it annexed powerful leaders, notably one Charles Stewart Parnell, who, from this time forwards, led Irish politics with a strength unequalled since the days of Daniel O'Connell.*

A bad season and failure of crops added to

* See page 50.

Ireland's misery, the cry of famine once more rang through the land, peasants could not pay their rent, and were, by law, evicted from their homesteads. Outrage followed and a veritable reign of terror began in certain districts.

In the midst of this, the Beaconsfield ministry fell, and, uttering in deep and significant tones the one word "Ireland," Lord Beaconsfield passed from public life for ever.

Mr. Gladstone now "faced the music," which grew louder and ever louder. A new Land Act failed to bring peace, the tale of horrors grew, and new tactics were tried. Mr. Forster, Secretary for Ireland, was ordered to seize Mr. Parnell and other leaders of the Land League, and confine them in Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin. With "heroic energy" Forster locked up every suspected leader and Gladstone exclaimed, in a famous speech on Ireland, amid enthusiasm from friends and foes alike, words he believed to be true, "Our enemies have fallen, have fallen."

But this forcible suppression of the Land League, together with the imprisonment of Parnell, already Ireland's hero, was doomed to failure. Across the Irish seas all was misery and confusion. Broken down by the "stress of the struggle," Gladstone resolved on the surprising step of releasing Parnell and his fellow-leaders, on condition that they would help him with measures to pacify the country. The release took place in 1882. Forster, the Irish Secretary resigned at once, and Lord Frederick Cavendish was sent to fill his place.

The Lord Lieutenant, Lord Cowper, had already resigned, and the state entry of the new Lord Lieutenant, Lord Spencer, was made on May 6th,

a never to be forgotten day in the history of Great Britain. That evening Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, a well-known official of the Castle, were walking in Phœnix Park, Dublin, when some ruffians set on them and slew them. The ghastly news spread. A general rising was expected. Parnell hastened to express his horror at the disgraceful crime, other Land Leaguers eagerly protested that they had had no share in it. A Crimes Act followed, the murderers were brought to justice and hanged.

But Ireland was not pacified. And away West the great emigrant ships still carried Ireland's unhappy sons away to other lands—men, women, children, weeping bitter tears as they left their little mud homesteads, amid the deep solitudes of their island home, dear to them still.

The Gladstone Government now tried a policy of coercion once more, but this and other "remedial measures" failed, and at the end of three years he finally adopted the idea of Home Rule.

Gladstone was already seventy-six when he became Prime Minister for the third time, and it became openly known that he had thrown in his lot with Mr. Parnell and the Irish Party, thus splitting the Liberal Party in England into "Unionists" and "Home Rulers." He was determined to sever the Union, which had lasted in name for eighty-six years, and to give Ireland back her Parliament in Dublin. Long years of crime convinced him that Parnell might be right; perhaps, after all, the Irish understood their own affairs better than England did. His friends could not all agree with him. "I love Gladstone, but I hate his Irish policy," said his old friend Tennyson; but nothing could

daunt him, and "the great man rushed upon his fate."

The secret of the new Bill had been well kept. It was to be unfolded on April 8, 1886. On that famous day the House of Commons was packed from end to end. The Irish Members had been there since six o'clock in the morning; by nine o'clock there was not a seat to be had. Princes and peers thronged the lobbies.

Through this human sea the aged Prime Minister at last made his way, while the House rang with cheers. For over three hours the old orator addressed the House of Commons amid breathless silence. The Bill gave to Ireland a Parliament of her own, with 309 Members, including peers, to sit in a single chamber: no Irish Members were to come to Westminster.

England was not ready for so complete a separation. Passions ran high, old friendships were strained to breaking, fierce speeches were hurled from all sides, the Irish alone were satisfied. But the Bill was lost by thirty votes, and Gladstone dissolved Parliament and appealed to the country, with the result that the Unionists came in with a great majority.

Years passed on. Though beaten, Gladstone and Parnell fought on for the cause they believed to be right, till another blow fell. In 1889 a tragic and painful disclosure showed that Parnell—the popular Irish leader—was not what men had thought him. Two years later he died.

Gladstone was now left to face the storm alone, and after six years of Opposition he once more became Prime Minister. He was eighty-three when Prime Minister of England for the fourth time. The

dream of his old age was still to force a Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons.

On February 1, 1893, the new Parliament met, and a fortnight later Mr. Gladstone—now eighty-four—rose, in a densely crowded House, to introduce the second Home Rule Bill. It had been carefully prepared, but the Lords would not pass it, and it was thrown out by a large majority.

Since these days little was definitely done to give the Irish Home Rule, though in 1898 a measure of Local Government, such as existed in England, was extended to Ireland. County Councils, District Councils, and Boards of Guardians were established, and local Irishmen, rich and poor, had some responsibility of government thrown upon them.

But of more importance even than this, was the feeling that was creeping over the country—the idea of working, of re-creating from within, instead of brooding over a tragic past and laying every disaster at England's doors.

Ireland's nationality was her pride; her people were still Celts, poetic, imaginative. Feelings of patriotism and religious fervour grew unchecked in the Emerald Isle across the Irish Sea. Love of country was deep and passionate, and the Irishman was ready to die for the acres on which he could barely exist; for a quarter of the whole island was barren mountain, bog, and waste. In their thousands and tens of thousands the Irish emigrated to Canada and the United States.

Whereas when Queen Victoria came to the throne there were three times as many people in Ireland as there were in Scotland, during the sixty years of her reign the population fell by four millions, a record unparalleled in the history of the world.

Many of those that were left behind in the deserted country fell into a state of mental gloom and melancholy.

A new Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Technical Instruction was opened, under Horace Plunkett, to develop the resources of the country, and to teach the people better methods of farming. Bee-keeping was encouraged, dairy work taught by Danish experts, home industries started, market gardening organised, lace-making taught.

"We have been fighting England as our only enemy," they said at last, "and all the while we ourselves were our greatest enemies."

Perhaps one of the most touching episodes in the modern relations of England and Ireland lay in the last visit of Queen Victoria. She had visited the country in early days, and spent happy times there with her husband and children; but since the death of the Prince Consort, in 1861, she had never crossed the Irish Channel. Now in her old age (1900) she felt perhaps she had neglected this near part of her Empire, and, despite opposition at home, she paid them a last visit, and was received with enthusiasm by these warm-hearted subjects of hers.

So the century ended with a better understanding. Old ideals may yet return, and from "the old withered tree a new plant will grow up again."

To quote the words of a modern Irishman *: "I see the day coming when the people that were half dead . . . will hold up their heads again, and many of those who went far away beyond the sea . . . will live in quiet and content among their friends and their kindred. And gladness and high courage will

* Douglas Hyde.

be among us again, and the people who have no understanding will understand, and the people who have no learning will learn, and the people that could not write will be writing . . . and the people that did not work will be working, and the people that did not plant will be planting, and the people . . . that never thought will be thinking, and the people that had forgotten will remember, and the people that are crying will be laughing, and the people that were not wise will be full of wisdom, and the people that were hushed will be shouting."

"Then should we, growing in strength and in sweetness,
Fusing to one indivisible soul,
Dazzle the world with a splendid completeness,
Mightily single, immovably whole."

XXXVIII

GLOOMY DAYS IN EGYPT

"Giving to friends and foes all we have won for ourselves;
Liberty, justice, wealth: the arts and the trade of the white man,
Mercy and truth to the black, quiet abundance for all;
This is our lesson of life and that is the bond of our Empire."

—Alfred Mumby.

BUT while Ireland was, as Gordon said, "like a fretting cancer eating away our vitals as a nation," he himself was leaving England for the last time on his famous journey to Khartum.

Since the days when England had suddenly bought up the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal Egypt had been threatened with ruin and it had become necessary for the Powers to intervene.

In 1879 England and France jointly assumed the task of controlling Egypt. But this "Dual Control" as it was called, had a troubled history. Two years later a National Party came to the fore, a body of natives jealous of European interference. These rose under their leader, Arabi Pasha, an Egyptian soldier, surrounded the Khedive's palace, and compelled him to dismiss his ministers. The revolt gathered weight. Europeans fled from Cairo, and for the moment Arabi in his triumph fortified

Alexandria and planned an attack on the Suez Canal.

But England could not stand by and see her route to India in danger. France refused to interfere, so it was left to this country to suppress the rebellion and restore the Khedive's authority.

Early on the morning of July 11, 1882, the bombardment of the Alexandrian forts was opened by English ironclads and gunboats. The forts were wrecked, the garrison driven out, the English landed and took possession of the ruins. Arabi himself had escaped, but only to raise an army inland.

So Sir Garnet (afterwards Lord) Wolseley was sent from England and at Tel-el-Kebir, between Ismailia and Cairo, he struck a blow at the National Party. Landing at Ismailia with some of our finest British regiments, he marched hurriedly across the desert, guided by the brightness of the Egyptian stars, took Arabi completely by surprise, and in half an hour "with one brilliant dash scattered to the winds the hopes and fears" of the Egyptian leader; then he rode hastily to Cairo, where the Khedive was at once re-instated.

A great responsibility now rested on England. She was bound to remain to support the Khedive's authority and guard her own interests in the Suez Canal. The "Dual Control" was at an end and a Single Control was now established by England alone.

In this way arose England's unique position in Egypt.

"England, what thou wert thou art,
Gird thee with thine ancient might,
Forth and God protect the Right!"

But while Arabi was leading a revolt against Europeans in Egypt, away to the south in the far Sudan, only recently left by Gordon, another revolt was brewing, under a leader known to history as the Mahdi, or "inspired One."

The son of a carpenter at Dongola, the Mahdi adopted a religious career and called on all Mohammedans in the land to follow him in a revolt against their Egyptian rulers. Groaning under oppression and misrule, the Sudanese rose and followed the Mahdi in ever-increasing numbers. In July, 1882, they destroyed the Egyptian troops of the far south and the following year the town of El-Obeyd, 200 miles from Khartum, surrendered and the Mahdi thus obtained a firm footing in the Sudan. He now advanced farther and farther north, till it was felt something must be done and at once.

Preparations were made to crush the rebellion. General Hicks, in charge of the garrison at Khartum, hurriedly collected a force to march against the Mahdi's strength. Bravely enough the mixed little army under Hicks Pasha set forth into the lonely desert. But they were never seen again. They were completely and utterly destroyed by the Mahdi's forces, and a fortnight later the melancholy news was flashed to Cairo and London.

The disaster strengthened the position of the Mahdi, and imperilled the isolated European garrison in the distant provinces, including Khartum, where four thousand loyal Egyptians held a huge black population which might rise at any moment and join the Mahdi. Berber Dongola, Kassala—all were in peril.

At last both Egyptian and British Governments were roused to action. England strongly advised

the Khedive to give up the Sudan and to retire to the frontier at Assuan. But it was impossible to leave the isolated garrisons in the desert cities to their fate. Gordon offered his services. They were accepted, and he was soon on his way to Khartum in order to arrange for the peaceful withdrawal of the garrisons.

And here we must tell again the oft-told story, one of the most tragic in modern history, of the fall of Khartum and the death of Gordon.

On January 26, 1884, Gordon and his companion, Colonel Stewart, left Cairo. A few faithful friends stood at the station to bid him goodbye, little thinking as the train rolled away into the night that they were looking their last on the cheerful, determined faces of the men who were giving their lives to a "task of mercy beyond human strength."

"Be not afraid: I am coming," Gordon telegraphed to the panic-stricken garrison, as he rode across the silent desert toward Khartum, where he arrived on February 18th. The Egyptian soldiers crowded round him, kissing his hands and greeting him as their father and saviour.

"I come without soldiers, but with God on my side to redress the evils of this land," he said. "I will not fight with any weapons save justice."

But it was not till he had been some days in Khartum that he began to realise the strength of the Mahdi; if he rescued only the garrisons, he must leave many old friends to their fate. This —being the man he was—he could not do; so he changed his mind, and, to complicate an already difficult situation, instead of withdrawing, he decided to remain, appealing to England for forces to "smash the Mahdi." This change of plan put the

English and Egyptian Governments into a very awkward position.

Meanwhile the Mahdi's troops were closing in, the telegraph between Khartum and Cairo was cut, all communication was at an end, and by April the city was closely besieged by the Mahdi's troops. A month later Berber fell into the Mahdi's hands and a "veil of darkness and silence never to be lifted during Gordon's lifetime descended upon Khartum."

We know now what happened day by day in the lonely desert city on the Nile; we know how Gordon and Stewart strengthened their defences and cheered on the little garrison with hopes of help from England, how the Nile rose and fell and no news came, how at last in despair Gordon sent his brave companion in the little steamer *Abbas* to make his way to Cairo, how Stewart was killed and Gordon left alone at Khartum.

His last pathetic journals describe his days as the long, sad weeks passed by. Busy all day in defending the town and ministering to the wants of his people, every night he mounted to the palace roof, and there, alone with his duty and his God, he kept that lonely watch over the ramparts praying for the help that never came.

Meanwhile, too late, a relief expedition started under Lord Wolseley, the hero of Tel-el-Kebir. But the difficulties he had to encounter were very great, and it was not till January, 1885, that the relieving forces drew near to Khartum. Then the Mahdists made their last attack.

It was Sunday, the 25th. The night was dark for Egypt. Gordon kept watch on the palace roof. "Thank God, like Lawrence I have tried to

do my duty," were his last words to the country that he felt had deserted him in the hour of need.

Just as the red sun was rising over the dark horizon the Mahdi's men crept into Khartum, made their way to the palace and slew the one Englishman there. Gordon was in his white uniform. "His sword was girt about him, but he did not draw it. He carried a revolver in his right hand, but he disdained to use it."

"Go," he used to say to those around him in those last days—"go, tell all the people that Gordon fears nothing, for God has created him without fear."

And so he died.

"History," says Lord Cromer, "has recorded few incidents more calculated to strike the imagination than that presented by this brave man, who, strong in the faith which sustained him, stood undismayed amidst dangers which might well have appalled the stoutest heart."

Two days later—it was Gordon's birthday—a few Englishmen in advance of the relief expedition fought their way up to Khartum, only to find the Mahdi's black flag waving over the palace, to learn that a general massacre of the garrison had taken place and the man they had come to save had failed gloriously and fallen at his post "faithful unto death."

The British expedition under Lord Wolseley, sent for the relief of Sudan, was hastily withdrawn and the whole country was absolutely abandoned to the rebels. For the next eleven years the whole Sudan was "barred off from the rest of the world in impenetrable darkness," till it was reconquered in 1898.

XXXIX

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE
1887

"A universal Britain, strong
To raise up Right, and beat down Wrong.
Let this thing be! Who shall our Realm divide?
Ever we stand together, Kinsmen, side by side!
* * * * *
For Britain and our Queen one voice we raise;
Laud them, rejoice, peal forth: worthy are they of praise!"
—L. Morris.

FOR fifty years the Queen had now ruled over her kingdom. She had been proclaimed Queen of Great Britain on June 20, 1837. Now she was Queen of more than Great Britain, for the ever increasing commerce and colonisation had brought new lands under her sway.

The story of how Englishmen had made their homes in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa has already been told; how they helped in the government of India and Egypt is also known. But it is still hard to realise what this marvellous expansion really means. There was no prospect of such progress at the beginning of the reign, and yet at the end of fifty years "a new world had been called into existence" by British energy and daring.

It was fitting, then, that this Jubilee should be celebrated by representatives gathered from all parts of the Empire, as well as by Royal Princes from the Courts of Europe. Three times only in the whole of England's history had a sovereign reigned for fifty years; never in the annals of any country had there been such enthusiastic rejoicings over such an event.

This was due to some extent to the Queen's own personality and character. She had given her whole life and strength for her people; no subject had ever been too large, no detail too small, for her close attention. Her Majesty had worked as hard as the poorest toiler in her great realm. Her work had increased in proportion to the increase of her possessions. To her toiling subjects came intervals of leisure and times of rest. To the Queen these never came. Whether she went to her country homes in Scotland or the Isle of Wight (she had no home in Ireland) her work followed her. Matters of State, important colonial affairs, European politics—these could not wait for the Queen to rest. And not only by reason of this high sense of official duty, but also for her warm-hearted sympathy, bestowed on all in trouble, she was respected and loved.

Hence it was no small wonder that Britons decided to give their Queen a reception as she passed through the streets of London without its equal in the history of England—

> "Queen that from spring to autumn of thy reign
> Hast taught thy people how 'tis queenlier far
> Than any golden pomp of peace or war
> Simply to be a woman without stain."

The great day, June 21, 1887, dawned at last. The streets of London were lavishly decorated; no pains were spared to make the great centre of the Empire —the largest city in the world—as gay and bright as possible. Early in the morning trains poured people into London from outlying parts of England. Such crowds had never been seen before, for since the coronation and marriage of Victoria railways, steamers, penny post, and telegraphy had made communication possible and within the reach of all. Every window along the route was filled, every balcony and gallery contained eager spectators of the royal procession, flags flew from tower and steeple—London was keeping festive holiday.

At eleven o'clock the great procession started from Buckingham Palace and cheer upon cheer rose from the dense waiting masses. The first part of the procession consisted of carriages full of foreign kings and princes, there were Indian princes too in cloth of gold, their turbans blazing with diamonds and precious stones. A body of Life Guards preceded the royal carriages containing the Queen's married daughters and granddaughters; these were followed by a brilliant escort of Royal princes riding on horseback, seventeen in number, including her three sons, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and the Duke of Edinburgh.

There were already two gaps in the Royal family since the death of the Prince Consort—the Duke of Albany and the much beloved Princess Alice. Amid the royal escort rode the Queen's five sons-in-law, the Crown Prince of Germany being the central figure of the group in dazzling white uniform with silver helmet. "Covered with medals and decora-

tions, he sat his charger as proudly as a mediæval knight in whom the spirit of old-world German chivalry lived again."

There too, rode Prince Christian, Prince Henry of Battenberg, the Grand Duke of Hesse, the Marquis of Lorne and the three grandsons, Prince Albert Victor (heir to the throne),* Prince George of Wales, and Prince Christian Victor of Schleswig-Holstein.†

The appearance of the Queen's carriage, drawn by the famous cream-coloured horses, was the signal for a tremendous outburst of cheering, which was kept up continuously along the route till Westminster Abbey was reached. With her drove her eldest daughter, the Crown Princess of Germany, and her daughter-in-law, the Princess of Wales.

A short and simple Thanksgiving Service took place: the Queen sat in the old chair of Edward the Confessor in which fifty years before she had been crowned as a young untried girl.

The enthusiasm that greeted her return from the Abbey was one long triumph—a triumph well earned and quietly accepted by the Queen of England.

"The enthusiastic reception I met with . . . has touched me most deeply," she said in a letter of thanks to her subjects some days later. "It has shown that the labour and anxiety of fifty long years, twenty-two of which I spent in unclouded happiness, shared and cheered by my beloved husband, while an equal number were full of sorrows and trials borne without his sheltering arm and wise help, have been appreciated by my people. This feeling and the sense of duty toward my dear country and subjects, who are so inseparably bound up with my

* Died 1891. † Died 1901.

life, will encourage me in my task, often a very difficult and arduous one, during the remainder of my life.

So passed the Jubilee Day of 1887—the Diamond Jubilee ten years later was yet more wonderful.

"So shall thy lofty name to latest years
Still loftier sound, and ever sweetlier blow
The rose of thy imperishable praise."

XL

THE DEFENDERS OF BRITAIN

"This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.
* * * * *
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true."—SHAKSPERE.

RIGHT through the summer of 1887 lasted the Jubilee celebrations. The two great services for the defence of the country—the Army and the Navy—had each their day of review before the Queen.

Both had improved vastly since the early days of her reign. Then the strength of the whole Army was just over a hundred thousand men, men enlisted in the service for life. They were taken from the lowest strata of society, and among them were paupers, villains, and thieves—the very "scum of the earth" as the Iron Duke was pleased to call these Soldiers of the Queen.

They were badly treated, huddled together in close barracks, wretchedly fed, unsuitably clothed, and brutally flogged for the slightest breach of discipline. It was small wonder that the service was unpopular with all, save the officers. Indeed, the English had then—as now—a rooted objection to the support of a standing army in times of

peace; and to maintain an army at all the Duke of Wellington, Commander-in-Chief, was obliged to hide away troops in India, Ireland, &c., to keep them out of public sight.

In vain did he urge on his fellow-countrymen the necessity of being prepared for war in times of peace. He could not "awaken the nation from its dreams . . . of unending peace."

And had the French landed on the south coast at this time "it is quite certain that our army could not have saved London from capture."

When in 1854 war was declared with Russia, it was found that the Duke had not spoken in vain. "For nearly forty years the nation by its persistent neglect of all military questions had sown the wind, and in the winter of 1854 the army in the Crimea reaped the whirlwind."

Not since the famous day of Waterloo had two great European powers stood face to face to settle their differences on the battlefield. England was roused from her heavy and prolonged sleep, to find that her Army was in a pitiable condition; her commanders were old and infirm, her officers were ignorant of military skill, her weapons were antiquated, her commissariat was non-existent.

The result was terrible suffering and a prolonged campaign. Success was due to the individual soldier, who showed himself splendid in courage, quiet in endurance, obedient to the call of duty, so that the remembrance of the muddles and blunders of the Crimean War have become swamped by the glorious achievements of Britain's soldiers.

"When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd."

These merits were rewarded by the Victoria Cross, instituted for the first time and presented by Queen Victoria to her brave soldiers on their return from the seat of war in 1856.

A Staff College was built at Aldershot for the training of officers for responsible positions in 1858.

A sudden wild alarm of invasion swept over the land the following year; the French might land on the southern coast, and who should defend the country? Men began to tremble for the safety of England. The result was the great Volunteer movement, born of a great wave of patriotism. A battle cry was summed up by the Poet Laureate—

> "There is a sound of thunder afar,
> Storm in the south that darkens the day,
> Storm of battle and thunder of war,
> Well if it do not roll our way.
> Storm, storm, Riflemen form!
> Ready, be ready against the storm;
> Riflemen, Riflemen, Riflemen form!"

Englishmen were not deaf to the warning sound: an armed force sprang up as if by magic. Men of all professions and trades enrolled themselves and devoted their leisure time to instruction and drill, long after the fear of invasion had passed away.

The movement was encouraged by the Prince Consort, that far-seeing patriot who did so much quiet work for his adopted country. He and the Queen reviewed the first Volunteer corps in 1860; great enthusiasm prevailed.

"A great Empire like ours should always be in

a position of perfect security"; said the Duke of Cambridge. "We should be in a position to say to all the world, 'Come if you dare.'"

The people themselves seemed almost at a loss to understand the full meaning of the Volunteer movement, which grew steadily as the years rolled on.

"Something—an impulse, an influence, an instinct perhaps, it is difficult to say—has passed over the land, entering into the life of our manhood. In a few short months of preparation the soil of this commercial and industrious England echoes the tread of legions of armed men."

Further very important Army reform took place in 1870. Formerly officers used to buy their commissions in the Army, now they were to be obtained by competitive examination. Flogging had already been stopped and short service allowed. The soldier's calling was growing into an honourable position, and enlistment in the Army was no longer a disgrace.

The Army has increased in size since the Queen's accession, but it is thought by some that it has not grown in proportion to the growth of the Empire. Other European Powers have long since had their system of national service, whereby every able-bodied man is trained to bear arms for the defence of his country. England has a quarter of the earth in her possession, but she has no national army for home defence, no training ground for the youth of her country, by which each member may feel that he is playing his part, however small, in the defence of his vast heritage.

"The day will surely come," said Lord Wolseley in 1887, "when England, in dire need of soldiers, will

realise too late that an army cannot be improvised in a moment or organised in a week. When that day comes, an angry because a deluded people will call for vengeance on those, who lacked the honest courage . . . to tell them the whole truth of our utter unpreparedness for war."

The Dominions beyond the Seas provide their own forces for home defence. Gallantly these colonial soldiers have come forward when the Imperial troops have been in difficulties. In the year 1881, within twenty-four hours of the English defeat of Laing's Nek, two thousand Australians had volunteered for service. In 1885 eight hundred men from New South Wales fought side by side with British and Indian troops at Suakim, while Canadians shared in the Nile expedition for the relief of General Gordon, and colonials played a prominent part in the South African War.

As the Duke of Wellington gravely warned his fellow-countrymen of their lack in home defence, as Lord Wolseley spoke in the midst of the great Victorian Age on the same object, so also Lord Roberts repeated the warning.

"This is a matter," he says, "that will not admit of delay, and the people of this country must decide at once that it shall be remedied, or they must hold themselves responsible for any disaster that may occur. Neither the Army nor the Government will be to blame, but the People themselves whose lack of patriotism prevents their taking any interest in the defence of their country."

But there was another party in England, when the Queen died, who felt that the Navy was sufficent protection for these islands, and that no foreign foe could ever land upon her shores; while others

held that a time of universal peace was even now in sight—a time when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."

"When the cannons roar and trumpets blaze no longer
And the ironclads rust and battle-flags are furled,
* * * * *
When the bars of creed and speech and race which sever
Shall be fused in one humanity for ever."

XLI

ENGLAND'S SEA POWER

"Her dauntless army scatter'd and so small,
Her island—myriads fed from alien lands,
The fleet of England is her all-in-all;
Her fleet is in your hands,
And in her fleet, her Fate."—TENNYSON.

WHEN the Queen came to the throne, the Navy of England, "whereon, under the good providence of God, the wealth, safety, and strength of the kingdom chiefly depends," had fallen low. No great naval battle had taken place since Nelson had given to his country the sea supremacy of the world and left to England—

"A kingdom none can take,
The realm of the circling sea."

The old wooden walls were still in their glory, Nelson's lieutenants were captains, and his famous captains were yet on the list of admirals.

Early in the reign the conditions of war were revolutionised by the advent of the steamer and the rapid disappearance of the sailing ship for purposes of fighting. The introduction of heavy guns made

it necessary to substitute ironclad vessels for the old wooden walls, thus changing the whole aspect of naval warfare, while the round shot which a man could lift into the gun by hand, had been replaced by huge masses of steel weighing upwards of three-quarters of a ton; the guns were worked by machinery and fired by electricity, with a range of several miles.

The immense importance of the Navy became more and more apparent as the years passed on and the Empire grew.

When the young Queen came to the throne, the cost of the Navy was about five millions, at her death it was nearly thirty millions, while there were just three times as many officers and men as in the old days.

Money and men for the Royal Navy were supplied by England alone. At the Queen's Jubilee in 1887 the fleet of England was a sight unparalleled in the history of the world. Collected for her Majesty's inspection at Spithead were 135 ships of every type and size, including 26 heavily armoured steel-clad ships, 9 cruisers, 5 torpedo cruisers, 35 first-class torpedo boats, 38 gunboats, and 13 troopships.

Ten years later, 1897, yet further developments had taken place, especially with regard to torpedo construction. There were a large number of swift torpedo boats, with their deadly weapon, the Whitehead torpedo—invented by an Englishman of this name—which could be set to travel under the water at any depths, carrying sufficient explosives to sink a battleship.

Great Britain was still undisputed Mistress of the Seas, but by the general introduction of mine and torpedo, weaker nations were brought on more level

terms and the future of naval welfare was rendered most uncertain.

Nevertheless, the Navy stood high in the estimation of friend and foe, and as a real fighting power was far above that of sixty years before. As the century passed, the calling of the Navy became an honourable profession. The condition of the sailor had much improved since the days when the British Navy was manned by inmates of prison and slum, swept on board almost by force, fed on salt junk, thrust into crowded and insanitary quarters, and flogged on the slightest pretext. Long before the Queen's death the "handy man," trained to endure without murmuring, hardened by exposure to wind and sea, with a knowledge of other lands beside his little island-home, had become one of the most valued assets to the British Empire.

As there can be no war without men, so the human element is of the first importance and the strength of the Navy depends, not alone on steam and speed, on gun and torpedo, on capacity to resist shot and shell, or the invention of submarine motive power, on use of electricity or high explosives, but on the men trained in the use of these, men on whose steady endurance, dogged determination, and unfailing pluck the English people have trusted—and will trust again.

The Sons of the Sea have ever been famed for their quiet heroism, and they have not been found wanting in this great Victorian Age.

The story of the wreck of the *Birkenhead* is now familiar to every child. The great troopship was launched in 1845; she was taking soldiers to the Cape of Good Hope in 1852, when she struck on a rock and began to sink. When it became evident that she

was going down, the men were drawn up on deck as if on parade, while women and children were helped ashore. There was no panic—perfect discipline prevailed. Even when the ship broke in half and the waves closed over her, every man was still in the ranks, facing death with that calm courage and disciplined heroism, which is never forgotten by their fellow-countrymen.

Again, the character of the British officer is kept high by such deeds as that of Capt. Kane, who saved the *Calliope* in 1889. H.M.S. *Calliope* was lying at anchor off Samoa, when a terrific hurricane burst over the island. The harbour was full of foreign warships and merchantmen, and the scene became one of indescribable disaster. So great, indeed, was the force of the tornado, that small ships were lifted bodily by the wind and carried inland. The shore was strewn with wreckage and more than one ship had foundered.

The *Calliope* was the only British man-of-war present. Captain Kane with true sailor's instinct saw that safety lay only in the open sea. He took all responsibility, slipped his cables, and steered away from land into the raging ocean. As she slowly forged her way past the United States flagship, which was dragging her anchors near by, the Americans forgot their own peril, manned the rigging, and gave three cheers for the British sailors.

The *Calliope's* victory over the gale was a triumph of British workmanship and British engine-room staff, for if there had been one flaw in either, disaster was certain.

Neither will Englishmen easily forget the midshipman who refused to leave his captain's side, when the ill-fated *Victoria* went down in 1893.

If such was the spirit of men in the Queen's Navy, the same quiet heroism prevailed among those who guarded the coasts of the British Isles.

The growth of lighthouses, lightships, and lifeboats has been very marked during the century. At the Queen's death there were no less than 300 lifeboats round our coasts, supported entirely by private citizens, and manned by sailors and fishermen who gave their services and often their lives to save life from wrecks on stormy nights.

There was the Deal coxswain, who in fourteen years was the means of saving 216 lives; the Ramsgate lifeboat crew, who, during the course of twenty-six years, saved 877 lives; and these are but specimens of what goes on annually round our coasts. And does not the courage of Grace Darling add to the glorious deeds of the sea during the great Victorian Age?

It is for the children of to-day to see that these traditions of the Sons of the Sea remain untarnished, these splendid records unbroken, so that the great Sea Power bequeathed by our forefathers may be maintained and guarded by Englishmen, not only for England, "bound in by the triumphant sea," but for a world-wide Empire.

XLII

LOOKING BACKWARD (SIXTY YEARS)

"It changes, it must change, it ought to change with the broadening wants and requirements of a growing country, and with the gradual illumination of the public conscience."—Lord Bowen.

THE Queen had reigned for sixty years, and as the outburst of enthusiastic applause died away, she must have looked back over the wonderful period through which she had lived with some satisfaction, as she thought of the immensely improved condition of her British subjects.

What if her revenue had doubled in that time? The number of her subjects had trebled in the British Isles alone, and the area over which she held sway was four times as large as it was at her accession. It was neither the increased wealth nor the added miles to her Empire that interested her so much as the improved condition of her poorer subjects. She could think of them now with better wages and shorter hours of work, better housed, better fed, better clothed than in the early years of her reign.

True, they had left the countryside desolate, and crowded into the towns for work, for the farmers had suffered heavily from the effects of Free Trade

and the free importation of foreign corn. But town life had its advantages as well as its disadvantages. Free libraries provided the people with good literature, they had their swimming baths, their cricket clubs, and varied occupations for their leisure time. Their whole atmosphere was healthier.

The Queen could remember how her subjects in the early part of her reign were publicly hanged in London and the large towns of England, and how hundreds and thousands of people crowded to see the sight, a brutalising and demoralising pastime. She must have recalled with satisfaction that no public execution had taken place since the year 1868. She must have remembered the terrible alternative for those convicted of crime. She knew how they were chained, thrust into convict ships, and transported for life to Australia or Tasmania—till in 1858 all transportation was ended by the law of the land.

The very year of her accession 166 of her subjects had been sentenced to death and 266 had been transported for life, while in the year of her Diamond Jubilee only 20 had been sentenced to death; instead of transportation, healthy streams of emigrants yearly left British shores, to make for themselves new homes in those great sunlit lands across the seas, thus strengthening the bonds of the fast-growing Empire.

A great reduction of crime had taken place since free education had been provided for the children of Great Britain: the national mind had been elevated and refined, the effects of which were visible everywhere.

Where most could read and write, there was a growing demand for cheap books and newspapers. Queen Victoria might have remembered that at

her accession there were but five newspapers—the *Times* (7d.), the *Morning Chronicle*, *Standard* (an evening paper till 1857), the *Globe*, and the *Morning Post*.

The abolition of stamp duties and the introduction of printing by steam had increased the number, until in 1875 there were 325 papers printed in London alone, and in 1887 there were 2,135 in the British Isles, which number was still increasing when the Queen died.

This gave the People an opportunity of learning the affairs of the State from day to day—a matter of great importance, since already the working man had a voice in the government of his country. When the Queen came to the throne he had no part in the government. It was not till the Second Reform Act of 1867 that the working man of England had a vote.

In addition to this, the formation of County Councils in 1888, to deal with local matters relating to small areas, brought the possibility of governing on a small scale within the reach of all. Thus by means of education the poorest of the Queen's subjects could rise to the highest position in the Empire. This was impossible at the beginning of the reign, but the Queen could reflect with satisfaction on such a change, which might utilise the best brains and capacity in the kingdom, whether belonging to rich or poor.

Perhaps the changes that came with the cheapening of food were as far-reaching as any within the period. No longer did the working man live on home-cured bacon, home-churned butter, home-fed mutton, and home-brewed beer. The great ocean-going ships steamed from shore to shore, bringing

to England foods cheaper than she could produce them on the spot. From Australia came frozen beef and mutton, from Canada came meal for bread and biscuits, from Tasmania came fruit, from Jamaica bananas, from China, Assam, and Ceylon ever-increasing quantities of tea, from the lands washed by the Nile came abundance of sugar, rice from Patna and Rangoon, eggs from France and Holland, butter and cheese from Denmark and Brittany.

Similarly the huge imports of wool from Australia and elsewhere have made clothing cheaper and stockings within the reach of all.

A brilliant writer speaks thus of the luxuries that have come within the reach of the British artisan: "He has fared," he says, "as no royal sovereign ever fared . . . for a trifle his daily newspaper puts at his command information of the whole globe. At work, machinery of wonderful invention redeems his toil from servitude, and elevates it to an art. Is he fond of reading? There are free libraries open to him, full of intellectual and imaginative wealth. Is he artistic? Galleries rich with beautiful paintings and statues are prepared for him. Has he children? They can be excellently educated for next to nothing. Would he communicate with absent friends? His messengers pass in the Queen's livery faithfully bearing his letters everywhere by sea and land, or in the hour of urgency electricity will flash for him a message to the ends of the kingdom at the price of a quart of small beer. Steam will carry him wherever he would go for 1d. per mile; the hospitals he forgets when in health, render him help in sickness, and a waft of chloroform has abolished agony; while for dignity of citizenship, he may help, when election-time

comes, by his vote to sustain or to shake down the noblest Empire ever built by genius and valour."

These are but a few of the changes on which the Queen could look back with satisfaction as she neared the end of her long and glorious reign. They were changes which affected England most, because England was the heart and hub of the new Empire, which was contributing to her prosperity.

And England was to Queen Victoria what it was to her great predecessor, Queen Elizabeth—

"This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in a silver sea—
* * * * *
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
* * * * *
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land."

XLIII

AN AGE OF SCIENCE

"Force merges into force,
The atom seeks its kind;
The elements are one
And each with all combined."—PALGRAVE.

AMID all the glorious achievements of Queen Victoria's reign, the wonderful discoveries in science must ever claim a foremost place. Thrilling indeed are the stories of this scientific age, breathless the rapidity with which one after another burst upon the public mind, changing old-world customs, transforming time-worn ideas, and revolutionising the thought of centuries.

There were discoveries in astronomy, in electricity and magnetism, in botany and zoology, in medicine and surgery: all these great branches of science, which hitherto had stood apart, were merged into one, and for the first time in history the laws that governed plant and animal life were found to apply to mankind.

The name of Herschel calls up the vision of a man who, during the nineteenth century, devoted his life to the study of the heavens. The very year of the Queen's accession Sir John Herschel with his great

telescope at the Cape was sweeping the heavens for stars and planets; and his "Handbook," published in 1838, told the grand story of a solar system travelling through endless space. Among his other achievements he had named some 250 minor planets, and classified 5,000 clusters of little stars.

While developments were taking place in telescope and spectroscope, the discovery of photography brought these observations into the realm of fact. By means of this new art, the heavens could be photographed, and true pictures of the relative sizes of sun, moon, and stars were presented to the world at large.

The discoveries of Professor Tyndall on the subject of radiant heat became known in 1863, when one of the foremost men of science, Sir William Thompson (afterwards Lord Kelvin), was using his experiments in electricity for practical ends.

One December night in 1858 the first electric light flashed over the troubled waters from the South Foreland lighthouse, though private houses were not lit with it till 1878. By this time the great work of Lord Kelvin's life was done, and he had been the means of laying the deep submarine cable, first from Dover to Calais in 1851, then from Ireland to Newfoundland in 1866, until every foreign country and every colony were in communication with each other.

New discoveries in plant life by Sir William Hooker and other botanists led to the re-establishment of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew: they were the very first gardens of their kind in the whole world.

A closer study of plant life led Charles Darwin to the new theories which he gave to the world

in 1859 on "The Origin of Species." His book gave rise to much discussion, but when in 1871 it was followed by "The Descent of Man," which suggested that human beings and apes were descended from a common origin, a very storm of abuse burst forth. But though so fiercely attacked, the book had an extraordinary influence on literature, science, art, and religion during the latter half of the century.

Perhaps such a revolution in thought was only equalled by the changes that took place in the world of medicine and surgery.

At the Queen's accession both these branches of science were somewhat stationary, until the introduction of ether and chloroform into England in 1848 robbed surgery of half its terrors. Up to this time very few operations could be attempted; the wretched patient had to see all the preparations, and to feel all the pain. Many died merely from shock, others from surgical fever; only the strongest survived. Under chloroform it was found that operations could be performed slowly and painlessly, and many hundreds of lives were saved by this means.

Towards the end of this age, surgery was further helped by the wonderful discovery of the X or Röntgen rays, by which means the exact location of a bullet or foreign substance imbedded in the flesh could be detected.

Sir Joseph Lister—a name famous in the annals of Victorian medicine—found a means whereby greater care and cleanliness in surgery saved many a case that had hitherto succumbed to blood-poisoning after operation.

There is no time to tell of other discoveries which prolonged life and alleviated suffering—of the

staying of smallpox by vaccination, of the new treatment of consumption by light and air instead of warmth, of the diminution of typhus and cholera by means of improved sanitation, of the isolation of infectious complaints such as measles, scarlet fever, chickenpox, &c.

At the beginning of the Victorian era the State took no interest in the public health : water supplies were bad, dust-heaps lay in the streets, there were no public baths, and the death-rate was very high. The establishment of a Board of Health enforced a better state of things, and a higher degree of human cleanliness had a grand effect on the health of the community.

The telephone, wireless telegraphy, and motors were all in their infancy when Queen Victoria died, so they will not be touched on here.

Throughout the reign of Victoria the field of science was full of eager workers—all toiling in the great cause of humanity. The work was slow and laborious : it needed patience, knowledge, and a wondrous love. Some died without seeing the result of their toil; others lived to understand the unspoken gratitude of thousands of their fellows. England has given to the world some of the greatest discoveries of the century. Let her children not fail her in the future, or neglect for one moment this greatest of all her works.

"The old times are dead and gone and rotten,
The old thoughts shall never more be thought,
The old faiths have failed and are forgotten,
The old strifes are done, the fight is fought;
And with a clang and roll the new creation
Bursts forth, 'mid tears and blood and tribulation."

XLIV

SOME VICTORIAN POETS

"England my mother,
Warder of waters,
Builder of peoples,
Maker of men—

Hast thou not leisure
Left for the muses?
Heed'st thou the song smith
Forging the rhyme?

God on His Throne is
Eldest of poets
Unto His measures
Moveth the whole."—WILLIAM WATSON.

RICH as was the Victorian Age in able politicians, in good men of business, in colonial explorers, she was equally rich in her men of genius.

At her accession a great burst of poetry was just dying away. Sir Walter Scott had been dead for ten years, the poet Coleridge had died three years before, Southey was Poet Laureate, but he wrote nothing of note after 1837, dying six years later. He was succeeded in the Laureateship by Wordsworth, who was already seventy-three at the time; Byron, Shelley, and Keats had died within three

years of one another, when the Queen was but a little child.

But if the great lights were growing dim, others were "glimmering up the heights beyond," and soon some of the strongest singers of the age were giving their message to the new England of Victoria.

The age produced two poets at least of world-wide fame. The work of Alfred Tennyson, as Poet Laureate, has already been briefly noted. Let us see what his friend and contemporary Robert Browning did for England—

> "Here and there did England help me:
> How can I help England?—say."

This was Browning's attitude towards his own country. He helped her by the high standard of life he set before her, showing us—

> "A world as God has made it—all is beauty,
> And knowing this is love, and love is duty."

He advises his fellows—

> "To have to do with nothing but the true,
> The good, the eternal."

He sets before mankind lofty ideals to which attainment is impossible—

> "A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a heaven for?"

He has an invigorating message for the men of this generation; for "God speaks to men through me," he says, and he sees the danger of the age,

the striving after knowledge and power without love—

> "For life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
> And hope and fear—believe the aged friend—
> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love."

He condemns the tendency to sentimentality of the age—

> "What had I on earth to do
> With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?"

He has given us the ideal of hopeful manhood—

> "One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake."

After his romantic marriage with Elizabeth Barrett, his poet-wife, in 1846, he went to live in Italy, and together they both wrote out of the fulness of their hearts. Her "Sonnets from the Portuguese" are among the most beautiful love verses in the world—

> "I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
> I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
> I love thee with the passion put to use
> In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith."

For fifteen years the Brownings lived in perfect sympathy; both died many years before the Queen, leaving to their country and the world at large masterpieces of poetry which will live for ever.

Although the names of Browning and Tennyson stand out as master-poets of the Victorian Age, yet there were a number of lesser poets whose work helped to enrich our Victorian literature.

Amongst others may be mentioned Clough, Matthew Arnold, Rossetti and his sister, Morris, Swinburne, Kingsley, and Yeats—the Irish poet.

> "These live again,
> In minds made better by their presence: live
> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
> For miserable aims that end with self."

If Matthew Arnold complains that modern England—

> "Stupidly travels her round
> Of mechanical business, and lets
> Slow die out of her life
> Glory and genius and joy,"

there were others to say that this was not wholly true of this country of ours.

And in this age of breathless progress, when machinery had taken possession of the land, when science had reconstructed old beliefs, when competition for life was keen, and "earth's dreary noises" were increasing, it is some consolation to remember that England's poets never ceased to sing —to sing of magic lands, where—

> "The sun on the hill forgot to die,
> And the lilies revived, and the dragon fly
> Came back to dream on the river."

They have shown us how "to sail beyond the sunset," and to find that country in which "it

seemed always afternoon," to hear the call of the "off-shore wind and the thresh of the deep-sea rain," to listen to "lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore," to "go forth and share the overflowing Sun." For—

> "Through the gates that bar the distance, comes a gleam of what is higher."

XLV

CHRISTIAN ENGLAND

"God of our Fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine:
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget."—KIPLING.

WHEN Queen Victoria came to the throne the services in the Church of her land were lifeless indeed. Church buildings in town and country had been allowed to fall into decay; inside were high pews, the altar was covered with a faded cloth, a mixed choir of men and women sat in the gallery, and organs were but just introduced for playing hymns. Those hymns were sung slowly and mournfully, they were selected by the parish clerk from Bickersteth's "Christian Psalmody." A very gospel of despair was preached by a clergyman in a black gown to the few people who attended Sunday morning service.

The Nonconformists, who had increased steadily during the last fifty years of their existence, had done and were doing much to raise the poor and ignorant, by preaching to them a practical religion,

which included the practices of thrift and industry. Their services, albeit they were at this time carried on in dreary whitewashed buildings, which lacked inspiration, appealed to the manufacturing middle class of England, and in spite of many schisms and divisions, Nonconformity became the accepted form of religion for a large number of the British Commonwealth.

But as the century rolled on, the activity that was so marked a feature of the age found its way into the religious life of the English people.

Various schools of thought arose, reviving interest in religious matters, and producing a renewed enthusiasm in all ecclesiastical affairs. Such names as Pusey, Newman, Arnold, Maurice, Kingsley, and Stanley, Chalmers, Spurgeon, Dale, and Martineau stand out as leaders of religious thought during the century.

But the old indifference had gone for ever. Churches were restored, choirs were trained, new hymn-books were compiled, a gospel of hope and love was preached. This met the needs of an age growing rapidly in intelligence, enthusiasm spread from the Christian teachers to their congregations, churches filled, and the effect revolutionised social life.

Social work sprang up in connection with all religious communities. Guilds, societies, meetings, Sunday Schools, missions, lectures, clubs, hospitals, schools became part of the great life-giving scheme which is the very basis and foundation of the British Empire.

The very growth of missionary societies testified to the new activity from within the Churches, however diverse their opinions. With the growth

of the Empire, a great responsibility for the vast numbers of heathen brought under the British flag dawned on the Churches. As missionaries had helped in the building up of the Empire, so missionaries were now ready to work in the re-creation of that Empire abroad. And England gave of her wealth ungrudgingly to help forward the work.

Such, briefly, was the outward change, from the frozen lethargy into which the English Churches had fallen at the beginning of the Victorian era, to the enthusiastic activity that grew with the growing years, and stirred them into an inspiring and uplifting energy.

How far they really affected the inward life no man can tell. But the new spirit of religious tolerance, the gospel which preached the blessedness of mercy and the grandeur of compassion, the universal yearning to relieve oppression and mitigate suffering, the self-denial of philanthropy and the growing feeling of brotherhood—these were no slight indications that modern Christianity was growing from within.

If it were not so, the England of the Victorian Age could not have created her Empire over seas, her children would not have built for themselves churches in their new cities of distant lands, and cried to the Mother Country to send them ever more and more Christian teachers, so that their sons might be brought up in the faith of their fathers.

It was a Victorian poet who bade them remember that—

> "More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of";

that—

> "The whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

It was a Victorian poet who cried to us out of his divine satisfaction—

"God's in His heaven—all's right with the world."

It was a Victorian hero who could lay down his life without fear, because he had "endured as seeing One who is Invisible"; a Victorian explorer who was found dead in an attitude of prayer in the very heart of tropical Africa; a Victorian painter whose life-motto was "The Utmost for the Highest."

Further, the moral fibre of the race stood sorely in need of strength, the individual character in need of higher development; commercial dealings required purifying, all daily life elevating. This was the work before the Christian teachers of England and her Empire.

It was for them to keep the great Ideal fresh and strong before a people to whom prosperity might spell danger, to cement by the increasing richness of a common religion, that bond that knits brother to brother across the wide and trackless seas.

In their hands lay the real consolidation of the British Empire. Of all the forces which determine moral character, the most powerful is that of religion, without which no people can live, no nation can stand, no Empire can grow.

"Father in Heaven, who lovest all,
Oh, help Thy children when they call,
That they may build from age to age
An undefilèd heritage."

XLVI

MR. GLADSTONE
(1809–1898)

"He stood forth simply, as a leader in the cause of humanity."
—J. M'Carthy.

IT is impossible not to associate the ideals of Christian England with the name of one of the foremost Victorian statesmen—William Ewart Gladstone. He was a man "who reverenced his conscience as his king," whose "glory was redressing human wrong." To the Church of England he clung with ever-increasing love as the years rolled onwards, for therein he felt lay England's strength.

Whatever may be the verdict of political friends and foes, none will ever deny that William Gladstone lived his long life in simple singleness of heart, that his faith shaped his conduct, controlled his thoughts, and unostentatiously guided his life, leaving to the English people a splendid example of strong and practical Christianity.

The name of Gladstone has often occurred in this story of the great Victorian era; but it will be well to collect together a few of the events of his life, in order that the Liberal statesman may stand out beside his political opponent Disraeli, whom he outlived by eighteen years.

The son of one of England's merchant princes, who had made his fortune in West Indian sugar in the days before the abolition of the slave-trade, he went to Eton and Oxford and passed out into the great world of politics. At the Queen's accession he was a young man of twenty-eight, who had already held the post of Under Secretary to the Colonies in Sir Robert Peel's Tory ministry.

"Mark that young man," said an English minister; "he will be Prime Minister of England;" while the Bishop of Oxford prophesied success when he wrote, "There is no height to which you may not fairly rise in this country. You may at a future date wield the whole government of this land."

He became a member, under Sir Robert Peel, of the Queen's first Tory Cabinet in 1841, a young man "of unblemished character and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of these stern and unbending Tories."

It is curious to remember that Gladstone began his political life as a Conservative and Disraeli as a Liberal, and that both men changed their views and became shining lights on the other side. When the question of Free Trade arose, Gladstone convinced himself that it was a move in the right direction, while Disraeli argued for the continuance of Protection. The promoters of Free Trade won,* and it fell to Mr. Gladstone to reduce the customs duties of England.

In 1852 the Budget of Disraeli was fiercely attacked by Gladstone, who, by his great speech on this occasion, brought about the fall of the Government. Succeeding his rival as Chancellor of the Exchequer (1852–4), he at once abolished the soap

* See page 60.

tax, reduced the heavy tax on tea, and by other economic measures he was soon regarded as one of the leading financiers of Queen Victoria's reign.

The harassing days of the Crimea over, he again became Chancellor of the Exchequer (1859–1866), scheming for the abolition of the tax on paper, which paved the way for cheap books and newspapers. It fell to his lot to introduce a Reform Bill in 1866, and on this subject he delivered one of his most famous speeches.

"You cannot fight against the future," he pleaded in a voice of solemn warning, which thrilled through the House. "Time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of these debates does not for a moment impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you. They work with us, they are marshalled in our support. And the banner which we now carry in the fight . . . yet will float again in the eye of Heaven and will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms, perhaps not to an easy, but to a certain and to a not distant victory."

But the Reform Bill was defeated, and Gladstone retired to his happy home at Hawarden for a time. But rest was not for him.

A new and yet more democratic Reform Bill was passed by the Opposition, and Disraeli became Prime Minister; but in 1868 Gladstone was called by the Queen to form a Cabinet.

"My mission is to pacify Ireland," he said as he accepted office, and to this end he set himself with his whole soul. His task was colossal.

"To soothe the wounded feelings and the painful recollections of her people . . . to attach her to this

island in the silken cords of love," was no easy matter. His first proposal was to disestablish the Irish Church as a State Church.

"If we be chivalrous men," he said in one of his famous speeches on the subject, "I trust we shall endeavour, as far as in us lies, to wipe away all those stains which the civilised world has for ages seen, or seemed to see, on the shield of England in her treatment of Ireland. If we be compassionate men, I hope we shall now, once for all, listen to the tale of woe which comes from her. . . . But above all, if we be just men, we shall go forward in the name of truth and right, bearing this in mind, that when the case is proved and the hour is come, justice delayed is justice denied."

Gladstone's Irish work has already been described.* We have seen how he disestablished the Irish Church and passed a Land Bill for Ireland, how he convinced himself on the Home Rule Question, and brought in a Bill for Home Rule, which was defeated in 1885, how at the age of eighty-four he once more came forward as Ireland's champion and urged England to pass a measure bestowing Home Rule on Ireland.

"Sirs," he ended a great two-hour speech, in a voice struggling with emotion, "it would be a misery to me if I had omitted in these closing years any measures possible for me to take towards upholding and promoting what I believe to be the cause . . . of all parties and all nations inhabiting these islands. Let me entreat you," he added in a low voice—"if it were with my latest breath I would entreat you—to let the dead bury its dead. Cast behind you every recollection of bygone evils; cherish, love, and sustain

* See p. 207.

one another through all the vicissitudes of human affairs in the times that are to come."

The Bill passed its third reading by a scant majority, to be thrown out by the Lords.

So William Gladstone passed from the scene of his long political life. He had been three times Chancellor of the Exchequer and four times Prime Minister of England; he had reduced the Tariff Customs from five hundred to fifty, and amongst other measures, he had been responsible for the Irish Land Act, the Elementary Education Act, the abolition of the soap and paper duties, and the Local Government Act.

As an orator he had no equal in the great Victorian age, and his speeches were full of classical allusions and quotations from his favourite authors. He wrote on matters political, theological, and literary, and in his pursuit of knowledge he found relief from anxiety and comfort under disappointment.

His home life has been called "perfectly happy," and when he died, at the advanced age of eighty-eight at Hawarden, it appeared to many that "the light seemed to have died out of the sky." Even a foreigner echoed the feelings of many Englishmen when he said, "On the day that Gladstone died the world lost its greatest citizen."

XLVII

THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (1897)

"So hast thou won thy people's hearts: they see
Wife, mother, friend, not Queen alone, in thee."
—TENNYSON.

TEN momentous years had passed since the Jubilee procession of 1887. The Queen had now reigned for sixty years—longer than any other British sovereign had reigned before her. She was an old lady, and the heavy burden of Empire was beginning to tell severely upon her. But even she was probably not prepared for the great unrehearsed feature of this Jubilee celebration, the hearty recognition and spontaneous outburst that greeted the representatives of the great self-governing colonies beyond the seas.

It had been the work of Mr. Chamberlain, a prominent statesman of the latter part of the Victorian era, to invite the Premiers of the colonies to come over and take part in the Jubilee festivities. With one accord they accepted and came, many of them now paying their first visit to the British Isles, to show allegiance to the aged Sovereign who was their acknowledged head.

Once more as heretofore the foreign lands sent representatives. Austria sent her heir-apparent; Germany, France, Russia, Spain, Italy, all sent envoys; indeed, no less than fifty foreign lands were represented, and many gorgeous gifts in silver and gold were showered on her Majesty.

But amid all these imposing foreigners none was so striking in his stately bearing as the Crown Prince of Prussia, who had died within a year of the Jubilee of 1887. There were other gaps in the ranks of the Royal Family. Prince Henry of Battenberg was gone, and the young heir to the English throne, the Duke of Clarence, had died on the eve of his marriage in 1892.

Let us, then, recall the vast procession, a mile and a half in length, in order to realise the importance of the Queen's scattered realms. Preceded by a hundred men of the Royal Navy, rode detachments of British Life Guards, Horse Artillery, Dragoons, Hussars, Lancers and the Imperial Service Troops (raised by the native Princes of India for the defence of the Empire). Then came sixteen carriages, containing the Royal princesses, children, and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Queen, noticeable among them being the widowed Empress Frederick and Princess Henry of Battenberg.

The enthusiasm of the day was reserved for the colonial detachment, headed by a band of the Royal Horse Guards. First, with a contingent of Canadian Cavalry and Canadian Mounted Police came the Premier of the Dominion of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. They were closely followed by troops from New South Wales (Australia), with the Premier, G. Reid; from Victoria, with the Premier, Sir George Turner; from Queensland, with the Premier, Sir

Hugh Nelson; from South Australia, with C. C. Kingston; and West Australia, with Sir John Forrest; from Tasmania, with Sir E. Braddon; from New Zealand, with Hon. R. Seddon; from the Cape of Good Hope, with Sir Gordon Sprigg.

Almost startling in its ecstasy was the reception of these sons of England; the reason has been well stated by Kipling.

"Truly ye come of The Blood: slower to bless than to ban,
Little used to lie down at the bidding of any man.
Flesh of the flesh that I bred, bone of the bone that I bare:
Stark as your sons shall be—stern as your fathers were."

* * * * *

Also we will make promise. So long as The Blood endures
I shall know that your good is mine: ye shall feel that my strength is yours

* * * * *

Because ye are Sons of The Blood and call me Mother still."

These cheers had hardly died away when the Indian Princes followed with a dazzling escort of Bengal Cavalry and Lancers, Punjab Cavalry, Bombay and other local forces of the Crown.

Nor were the smaller colonies unrepresented. There were militia and artillery from Malta, Trinidad Field Artillery and Infantry, the little Borneo Dyak Police with their English officers, Jamaica Artillery in their uniforms of scarlet with white facings, police from Sierra Leone, Royal Niger and Gold Coast Hausas, detachments from Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements.

Cheer upon cheer rose and fell on the air, till at last the Royal carriage and the cream-coloured horses came in sight, and, escorted by her two sons on horseback, the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII.) and the Duke of Connaught, the aged Queen,

bowed with the burden of her seventy-nine years, came before her delighted subjects.

Then their loyalty and affection burst forth unrestrained; a very roar of applause greeted her triumphal progress through the streets of London. Her character and the wonderful progress which had marked the sixty years of her reign combined to produce in her people that which might well force the tears to her eyes.

The Poet Laureate of the day expressed their feelings in these lines—

> "Their thoughts shall be my thoughts, their aim my aim,
> Their free-lent loyalty my right divine,
> Mine will I make their triumphs, mine their fame,
> Their sorrows mine."

But beyond this personal note there was another we shall do well to understand.

When the Queen came to the throne the Monarchy was insecure. At the Diamond Jubilee the people of England realised that it was stronger than it had ever been before. This was due partly to the failure of the various Republics to realise perfection, partly to the Queen's wise consent to the democratic demands which served to strengthen the Monarchy and increase the people's confidence in their Sovereign, partly to an almost unconscious growth of the Imperial spirit.

Slowly, during the long years, the people had been realising that the throne of England stood at the centre, not only of a kingdom, but of a world-wide Empire, and the pride of sovereignty had entered into their very hearts. For in this world-wide Empire of theirs there was wealth, there was trade.

there were careers, there was a new element of hope for all.

"From my heart I thank my beloved people. May God bless them."

These simple words—the thanks of a mother to her children—were flashed to every corner of the Empire on this Royal day, while wire and cable alike carried congratulations to her, who was the centre of an admiring world.

Over two thousand beacons that evening sped the glad news from hill to hill over the British Isles.

And so the greatest day perhaps in the whole Victorian era drew to its close.

XLVIII

MODERN EGYPT

"My policy . . . may be summed up in a very few words. It has been to tell the truth."

—Lord Cromer (farewell speech to Egypt).

OF all the countries that England had helped during these last sixty years, there was none of which she might more reasonably be proud than Egypt.

A new era had dawned for this country when Sir Evelyn Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer) arrived in Cairo as British Consul-General in 1883. He strove with a complex situation following on the fall of Khartum in 1885. He carried out the abandonment of the Sudan, though the hope of recovering it later was never absent from his mind. Through dark days of gloom he had emerged from an apparently hopeless situation. The country was well-nigh bankrupt owing to the reckless expenditure of the Khedive Ismail; the canals and dams on which the land depended had been neglected, while the gloriously fertile delta of the Nile—the granary of the ancient world—was rapidly deteriorating, owing to its clumsy and now unscientific water supply.

A sum of nine millions was now raised by the six Powers and Turkey for the payment of Egypt's debts, and on one of these millions Sir Evelyn Baring flung himself "with the passionate eagerness of a man who saw its boundless possibilities for good in capable hands," knowing that it was life or death to Egypt to put into proper working order the great central works on which the irrigation of the Delta depended.

With this single million he set to work to irrigate the land, which was crying aloud for water. The result was so successful that of late years many millions have been forthcoming and profitably spent on the further improvement of Egyptian irrigation.

Before the engineers had been at work ten years the cotton crop had trebled and the sugar crop more than trebled. A new spirit had returned to Egypt. The crowning touch on the great series of irrigation works which ensured a regular water supply to both Upper and Lower Egypt was added in 1900, with the famous Assuan Dam, one of the greatest storage reservoirs in the world. It was built entirely by English engineers, some 600 miles south of Cairo and held up the river for 70 miles, enabling a summer as well as a winter crop to be raised throughout great portions of the country.

Justice was administered, the whip was no longer used to extort taxes from the people, and the down-trodden and oppressed Egyptians began dimly to realise that there was such a thing as justice between man and man.

Meanwhile, officered and drilled by Englishmen, the Egyptians were becoming efficient soldiers, and a British Commander-in-Chief, known as the "Sirdar," was appointed.

With this increasing prosperity the time was ripening for a reconquest of the Sudan, the "land of the blacks," who were living under the cruel oppression and tyranny of the Khalifa, the Mahdi's successor. There was misery throughout the length and depth of the Nile Valley, from the Egyptian boundary at Wady Halfa right away to Gondokoro.

The task of reconquering the Sudan was entrusted to the Sirdar, afterwards known as Lord Kitchener of Khartum.

Quietly he began to prepare for that great battle which would end the power of the Khalifa, restore the richest provinces of Africa to the Khedive, safeguard the sources of the Nile, and redeem the unhappy Sudanese.

The reconquest occupied three years—from March, 1896, to December, 1898. The first stage was from Wadi Halfa to Dongola, the second from Dongola to Abu Hamed, the third to Khartum.

In March, 1896, the Sirdar received orders to occupy a town fifty miles south of Sarras and to carry the railway even farther south. The troops were centred at Wadi Halfa and the railway construction was under Lieutenant (afterwards Sir Percy) Girouard. Railway and telegraph completed, the expedition pushed forward. Before the well-organised and well-equipped Egyptian Army the Khalifa's followers fled, Dongola was captured in September, 1896, and the first stage in the reconquest of the Sudan accomplished.

Two lines of railway towards Abu Hamed were now undertaken, one continuing along the line of the river and the other crossing 230 miles of the great Nubian Desert from Wadi Halfa to Abu Hamed. The town was captured by storm

in August, 1897, the Dervishes losing some two hundred and fifty killed, and the second stage of the reconquest of the Sudan was accomplished.

While the railway was being pushed on at Berber the Sirdar negotiated with the Italian Government for the restoration of Kassala and Egypt, and it was formally taken over on Christmas Day, 1897. Early in 1898 the Khalifa and his troops marched northwards, only to be defeated by the Sirdar at Atbara. The battle was fought on Good Friday, and it has been called one of the most brilliant achievements in the history of Africa. The victory was won by the Sirdar after half an hour of fierce fighting, several hundred Dervishes were captured and some three thousand Arabs killed.

The Khalifa now rallied all his remaining forces for a last defence of Omdurman, which had been the capital of the Sudan since the fall of Khartum in 1885. With drums beating and great war-horns sounding, with his black banner streaming in the midst, he marched his fifty thousand black men into the open plains about Omdurman.

Here on September 12, 1898, the battle raged which was to decide the fate of the Khalifa.

Omdurman has been called "a mere massacre of brave warriors rushing on certain death from foemen armed with the best weapons and well trained in their use." Every man of the Khalifa's bodyguard was shot down round the black banner, which flew six foot square from a long bamboo lance adorned with silver.

The battle over, the Sirdar rode to the old town, which was still held by some five thousand men and entered without opposition. The following Sunday he crossed the river to Khartum, and formed up the

troops in the open space which faced the ruined palace where Gordon had perished thirteen years before. Once again English and Egyptian flags flew side by side, and in the noonday sun a Memorial Service was reverently held for one of England's dearest heroes.

So the third stage of the reconquest of the Sudan was accomplished.

Gordon's death was avenged by the beginning of a new era of peace, freedom, and order to one of the most oppressed nations of the earth.

The Sirdar was made Governor-General of the new Egyptian Sudan, and the irrigation which Lord Cromer had so successfully improved in Egypt was now planned for the Sudan.

In order to carry out these reforms it was necessary to employ Englishmen, though the climate was ill-suited to them. But there, amid the silent desert land, the endless swamps, the huge spaces, the weary and waterless distances, little bands of Europeans worked out their lives in solitude and discomfort, in order to hasten the dawn of a new Sudan.

And in the dim days to come, when the sands of the desert turn into sugar-plantations, cotton-fields, or stretches of endless wheat, the Egyptian will realise what his land owes to these Englishmen—nothing short of the creation of a new Egypt.

XLIX

THE ENGLISH IN WEST AFRICA

"There's a Legion that never was 'listed,
That carries no colour or crest,
But, split in a thousand detachments,
Is breaking the road for the rest.
* * * * *
The ends o' the Earth were our portion,
The ocean at large was our share;
There was never a skirmish to windward
But the Leaderless Legion was there."—KIPLING.

WHILE the Sudan was being brought under law and order by the English, another large tract in West Africa, known to-day as Nigeria, was looking to England for protection and help.

In Western Africa lie our oldest possessions. Sierra Leone was the very first portion of African soil formally recognised as English in the eighteenth century, and acquired for the purpose of settling freed slaves. After the accession of Queen Victoria England took under her protection some 200 miles of coast, and some of the hinterland bordering on the great French Sahara desert.

But beside this British colony of Sierra Leone, the English during the Victorian era purchased adjoining land from the Dutch, and the Gold Coast Colony

spread British influence farther along the coast. But in the hinterland of this newly-acquired territory lived a fierce tribe of warriors, known as Ashantis. These Ashantis deeply resented the influence of the British, they felt their trade was now cut off from the coast, and under their black king, Koffee, some forty thousand Ashantis invaded the British protectorate.

"I will carry my golden stool to Cape Coast Castle and there wash it in English blood," said the king, who still indulged in human sacrifices. England was obliged to take steps for the safety of her people.

So in 1873 Sir Garnet (afterwards Lord) Wolseley was sent to lead an expedition up-country, in order to break the power of the Ashantis. It was January, 1874, when a start was made from Cape Coast Castle. A march of 70 miles brought the English expedition to Prahsu, the borderland of the Ashantis; 100 miles of jungle lay between them, before they reached the capital, Kumasi; through dense tropical jungle, with huge trees matted together with creepers, they marched, pressing onward under stifling heat. Some 20 miles from their capital the black army stood in great force. They had chosen a commanding height surrounded by thick bush, and outnumbered their invaders by five to one.

On January 31st a ten-hour battle was fought. It was one of the many cases in the history of Victoria's reign, when modern warfare triumphed over savage ignorance. Gun and rocket did their work, and a sudden forward sweep of Highlanders, playing their bagpipes the while, dispersed the Ashantis, who fled in the wildest disorder. They left the ground strewn with relics of their flight; umbrellas, drums, muskets lay about with dead and

dying men. King Koffee himself, who had watched the battle, seated on his golden stool under a red umbrella, fled with the rest. The English then entered Kumasi—the place of death, which reeked with the blood of human sacrifice. But torrents of rain made the place uninhabitable, and the English were glad to turn their faces toward the coast. Peace reigned for a time.

But in 1888 King Prempeh succeeded to the throne of the Ashantis and troubles broke out again. Human sacrifices were restored and the slave-trade flourished.

In 1896 another expedition was sent to Kumasi. It was accompanied by Prince Henry of Battenberg —the Queen's son-in-law. But Kumasi was deserted. Not a shot was fired; quietly the troops entered, and formally annexed the kingdom of the Ashantis to the Gold Coast Colony. But the climate was unhealthy. Prince Henry caught fever and died, leaving his wife a widow with four young children.

Changes followed. The British brought peace and prosperity to the savage tribes plunged in the deepest ignorance of civilised life. The Ashantis now welcomed their new masters, missionaries got to work, the country was opened to traders, and shortly after the Queen's death the first train steamed into Kumasi.

Meanwhile the great tract known as Nigeria, about four times the size of the British Isles, was being added to the Empire. As Cecil Rhodes added Rhodesia, so another Englishman, Sir George Goldie, added Nigeria to the possessions of the Queen.

In 1886 the Royal Niger Company was formed to trade in the Niger Valley. Foremost among the merchants was one Mr. Goldie Taubman, once an

officer in the English Army, a man of keen foresight, courage, and public spirit.

Owing to the energy of these English traders the whole navigable part of the River Niger came under British control; gradually trade developed, treaties were made with native States, till more and more territory came under the Company's direction. But certain districts opposed the advance of English civilisation, the native chiefs revelled in their slave-trade, and one native State of Benin, ruled by a little band of fetish priests, refused any trading rights within their land. Not only did the men of Benin indulge in human sacrifice, but also crucifixion.

Englishmen could not tolerate the existence of such superstition and cruelty in their midst, and a mission of Europeans was sent to interview the King of Benin. The city stood on the river which flows into the bight of the same name: it was known to be a real death-trap—

> "Beware and take care of the Bight of Benin,
> Whence few come out though many go in."

The mission was made up of seven British officials, two interpreters, two British merchants, and two hundred natives; but while they were yet struggling through the thick bush, before ever they reached the city of Benin, shots rang through the air, and soon the little mission was attacked, and all but two Englishmen were killed. They crept unobserved into shelter, living on bananas for five days, till they were rescued by friendly natives.

When the news of the outrage reached England, the Government decided to send an army to punish the offenders. Admiral Rawson with a thousand

men and Maxim guns started for a 16-mile march, through thick bush and jungle, for Benin. They took the city by storm, and found a truly appalling state of things. The king had fled, leaving behind a "city of blood" indeed; there were crucified bodies and the remains of human sacrifice amongst other terrors. The city was set on fire, and one of the worst regions in Africa was destroyed. The ruins of the past became a new centre of civilisation, and on January 1, 1900, the whole of Nigeria came under the administration of the Crown.

Trade soon grew apace, and under two High Commissioners, the Protectorates of North and South Nigeria began to make strides as rapid as their neighbouring Crown Colonies of Lagos, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Gambia.

L

THE TRANSVAAL WAR (1899)

"One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne."—TENNYSON.

WHILE these smaller expeditions were taking place in West Africa, storm-clouds were bursting over South Africa. The question had arisen as to whether that country should be part of the British Empire or whether the two Dutch Republics should become the dominant power in it.

Between the years 1885 and 1895 the Transvaal had, owing to the discovery of gold and the influence of European capital, become the richest and most important State in South Africa.

By 1890 the inrush of outsiders to the Transvaal alarmed the Boers, who prided themselves on their independent Republic under their President, Paul Kruger. Fearful of being swamped by these gold-seeking outsiders, or "Outlanders" as they were called, Kruger raised the franchise, so as to be only obtainable by those who had lived fourteen years in the country. This gave rise to bitter feelings between Outlanders and Boers. The former—eager European adventurers—were creating the wealth of the Transvaal; they were paying heavy taxes to

the State but they were denied the rights of citizenship.

In 1893 a petition for a voice in the Government was presented to Kruger by some thirteen thousand Outlanders. It was treated with "contemptuous neglect" by the Boer rulers. The following year a petition signed by thirty-five thousand shared the same fate. Kruger was immovable.

"You see that flag," he said one day, pointing to the Dutch flag at Pretoria. "If I grant franchise, I may as well pull it down."

At last, thoroughly exasperated, the Outlanders of Johannesburg arranged to rise upon a certain night and attack Pretoria. They appealed for help in their undertaking to Cecil Rhodes, now Prime Minister at the Cape as well as Director of the Chartered Company that administered the affairs of Southern Rhodesia. He allowed Dr. Jameson, Administrator at Rhodesia, to co-operate with the rebel Outlanders.

But the "Jameson Raid," as this incident is called, most deservedly failed. The Outlanders postponed their rising, but Dr. Jameson, with a force of five hundred mounted police of the Chartered Company and three field guns, crossed the Transvaal border, only to be surrounded by Boers and forced to surrender.

Kruger dealt mercifully with the rebels, and the leaders were handed over to England to be dealt with. But a "grave injury to British influence in South Africa had been done," and all hope of redressing the Outlanders' grievances in the Transvaal were at an end for the present.

As the years passed on, Kruger's intentions became clearer. Cecil Rhodes had dreamed of a united

British Federation from the Zambesi to the Cape; but Kruger was planning a Dutch sovereignty, and he now prepared with renewed vigour for inevitable war by obtaining the best weapons that Europe could supply, and seeking information from German and French experts.

The British Government, whose leading spirit at this time was Mr. Chamberlain—Colonial Secretary—now sent out Sir Alfred (afterwards Lord) Milner as High Commissioner to the Cape. The appointment was popular with both parties at home. In the summer of 1899 the High Commissioner met Kruger at a Conference at Bloemfontein to discuss, among other matters, the vital question of the franchise.

But agreement was impossible, and the High Commissioner, reviewing the whole situation, said: "The case for intervention is overwhelming. . . . The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted grievances and calling vainly to her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain within the Queen's Dominions."

Still negotiations continued, England to the last hoping for a peaceful settlement of the question. Till on October 11, 1899, the Boer ultimatum burst upon the world, and a war—destined to determine the fate of South Africa and to prove one of the most severe in recent English history—began.

The two Dutch Republics were well prepared. Under the skilful leadership of Piet Joubert, Cronje, De Wet, and others, thousands of swarthy bearded burghers rode, well armed and well mounted, to war. They knew their country, and they were patriotic to the heart's core.

The English forces under Sir George White, who had but just arrived at the Cape, laboured under great disadvantages. The main body of the army was in Natal. Thither Joubert led his troops, and the opposing forces soon came into conflict. After a fortnight's hard fighting, Sir George White and some twelve thousand British troops were besieged by the Boers at Ladysmith. Here they remained for 118 days, till they were relieved by General Buller, but not till one-tenth of them had died from wounds and disease.

While Joubert was attacking the British in Natal, Cronje was besieging Mafeking—a small place just across the western borders of the Transvaal. In a few weeks Mafeking sprang from obscurity to fame. For 218 days it was ably defended by Colonel Baden-Powell, and the day of its relief was one of almost unparalleled enthusiasm throughout the Empire.

Before the end of October Kimberley—the diamond city—was also besieged by a formidable force of Boers, and was with difficulty held by Colonel Kekewich and Cecil Rhodes—the founder and director of the diamond mines. At the end of October the situation in South Africa was sufficiently serious.

While General Buller sought to relieve Ladysmith, Lord Methuen advanced to the relief of Kimberley. Three battles, all fought within a week, at the end of November resulted in the loss of a thousand men to Lord Methuen, and Kimberley was yet unrelieved.

A darker hour yet was to dawn in South Africa. "The week which extended from December 10 to 17, 1899, was the blackest we have known during our

generation, and the most disastrous for British arms during this century."

Before details of these reverses had reached England, Lord Roberts of Kandahar, with Lord Kitchener of Khartum as his Chief of Staff, was on his way to South Africa, charged with the supervision of the whole campaign. Already the colonies had given of their best; Australians, Canadians Tasmanians, New Zealanders had fought shoulder to shoulder with their British brothers; now yeomen, trained and untrained, poured into the country together with the regulars of the British Army.

Early in the New Year the whole situation changed as if by magic. Resolutely and secretly Lord Roberts had made his plans; skilfully and energetically he carried them out.

By February 15, 1900, Kimberley was relieved; by February 27th Cronje and five thousand men had been skilfully surrounded and captured at Paardeberg and the Boer plan of campaign broken up. By March 3rd General Buller had relieved Ladysmith.

"A single master-hand had in an instant turned England's night to day."

On March 6th Lord Roberts was able to begin his march to Bloemfontein. Notwithstanding stout resistance from the Boers, he entered the capital of the Orange Free State a week later at the head of his troops. His men, worn with living on half rations and forced marches under semi-tropical sun, swung into the town "with the aspect of Kentish hop-pickers and the bearing of heroes."

It was not till six weeks later that the advance to Pretoria was resumed. In the early days of

May, "when the season of rains was past and the veldt was green," Lord Roberts was ready for another of those "tiger springs" that had brought him in the old days from Kabul to Kandahar,* and more recently from Belmont to Bloemfontein.

The distance to Pretoria, capital of the Transvaal, the seat of her Government and the home of Kruger, was some 220 miles. The obstacles to be encountered were numerous, the opposition from Boer forces was not slight, the hills surrounding the city were bristling with forts, which the President had announced would "stagger humanity."

Nevertheless, a month later Lord Roberts led his army into the famous Transvaal capital, from which Kruger had just fled, with the contents of the Treasure House, and from the summit of the Raad-Saal at last floated the Union Jack.

The issue of the war was now no longer uncertain, though a most troublesome and harassing guerilla warfare continued for two years longer. The finish was left in the hands of Lord Kitchener, to whose organisation throughout much of the success of the campaign was due.

Thus the two Dutch Republics were annexed to the British Empire, and Lord Roberts returned to England to tell the now dying Queen with his own lips of the heroic courage of her Imperial soldiers on the field of battle.

Before peace was declared the Queen had passed away.

* See p. 200.

LI

THE DOMINION OF CANADA

"The loyal to this Crown
Are loyal to their own far sons who love
Our ocean-Empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England."

NOT only in England could the Queen reflect on the breathless activity of the last sixty years. She had but to glance at her great Dominion of Canada, separated by some six days of sea, to realise the colossal work that had been accomplished since her accession to the throne.

Since the days of her Federation the Dominion had increased, not only in area, but in population and wealth. This was due, not only to the natural resources of the country, the sea, the forest, and the mine, but to the untiring energy, the boundless self-sacrifice, the unceasing toil of England's sons and daughters, who have made the Dominion what she is.

There was ever new country to be explored, and this was done in the spirit of Kipling's "Explorer."

"God took care to hide that country till He judged His people ready,
Then He chose me for his Whisper, and I've found it and its yours!"

There were mighty rivers to be bridged, and great stretches of land to be spanned by railway. Yet no obstacles daunted the Canadians, they never flinched from the gigantic tasks that were set them. With varying success and unvarying determination they steadily pursued the quiet development of the country, till the complete triumph of their efforts was visible. What they wanted was more labour, more emigrants from England to help.

At the Queen's death they had possessed themselves of a country thirty times the size of the British Isles, not far short of the whole continent of Europe, and they had only one person every square mile. All through the great Victorian Age the Canadians were crying to their fellows in England to come out to the new lands and till them.

"Those that have stayed at thy knees, Mother, go call them in—
We that were bred overseas wait and would speak with our kin.

* * * * *

Gifts have we only to-day—Love without promise or fee—
Hear, for thy children speak, from the uttermost parts of the sea!"

But the English emigrated all too slowly, and men from the United States settled in large numbers on the land.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the century was the construction of the wonderful railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean—3,000 miles from shore to shore. It was a scheme vast beyond all others in those days, overshadowing all railway engineering in the whole world. On Dominion Day, 1886, the Canadian Pacific Railway was triumphantly opened, and passengers could travel from Quebec to Vancouver in a week.

Having thus established means of communication, Canada developed her resources rapidly. Her chief means of wealth lay in agriculture, minerals, forests, and fisheries. The country has been called the "Granary of the Empire" and the "Bread Basket of the World." Wheat-growing was her main industry, and at the Queen's death nearly half her population were engaged on farms, gardens, and orchards.

Education and co-operation soon produced results throughout the Dominion, which have brought ever-increasing wealth to the people. School gardens, Colleges of Agriculture, special teachers, and departments of research reduced agriculture to a science, and caused the fertile land to yield superabundant crops.

The rush to Klondyke goldfields in 1897 led men to turn their thoughts towards the mineral resources of the country, though the silver mines at Cobalt had already promised to be among the richest in the world, the coalfields of Nova Scotia had already become famous, and the prospects of the Dominion as an iron-producing land were looking brighter year by year.

The forests of Canada covered an area six times the size of France, and contained an almost inexhaustible supply of timber. They contained 120 different kinds of trees, including pine, oak, elm, beech, maple, and walnut. Here was timber for providing the finest cabinet wood, masts for the largest sailing ships, planks and even paper largely made from the pulp of spruce and poplar. The great logs were floated down the broad rivers in their tens of millions to the ports, whence they were shipped across the ocean. She sent her largest quantities to Britain and the United States.

Her fisheries, with her 13,000 miles of coast-line, were the largest in the world, and afforded employment to 80,000 of her inhabitants.

On the Atlantic coast, cod, lobster, herring, mackerel, and haddock were the principal fish, the great lakes supplied trout, pike, and sturgeon, while British Columbia produced vast quantities of salmon.

Such, then, were the products of the Dominion, of which more than half were taken by the Mother Country and about a quarter by the United States. Such, indeed, was her trade with England, that in the year 1897 Canada decided in favour of a customs arrangement with Great Britain and her colonies, the goods imported from these parts of the Empire coming into the Dominion on payment of one-third less duties than those levied on goods coming from other countries.

The subject of tariff was being much disputed at the death of Queen Victoria, but the attitude of Canada then was well summed up by Kipling:—

"A Nation spoke to a Nation,
A Throne sent word to a Throne:
'Daughter am I in my mother's house
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide by my mother's house,'
Said Our Lady of the Snows."

LII

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH (1901)

"She came to the Old Queen's presence, in the Hall of Our Thousand Years,—
In the Hall of the Five Free Nations that are peers among their peers:
. . . . .
And the Young Queen out of the Southland kneeled down at the Old Queen's knee,
And asked for a mother's blessing on the excellent years to be.
And the Old Queen stooped in the stillness where the jewelled head drooped low:—
'Daughter no more, but Sister, and doubly Daughter so—
Mother of many princes—and child of the child I bore,
What good thing shall I wish thee that I have not wished before?'"

—KIPLING ("On the Commonwealth of Australia.")

IN spite of the triumphant success of Federation in Canada, the passing years found Australia still holding aloof from the idea of union. At the close of the century there were six great self-governing colonies—Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and the Island of Tasmania.

Each of these had their own separate existence, their own Governor, Government, and trade regulations. In addition to this, the States were separated

from one another by six hostile tariffs, six postal and telegraphic systems, and six defence forces. But as the railway system spread from town to town, breaking down the barrier boundaries, inevitable quarrels arose, long-smouldering jealousies burst forth between State and State, and impossible situations were created.

Gradually the idea of union grew, and in 1889 an important step was taken by Sir Henry Parkes, resulting in a great Conference being held at Melbourne with representatives from each of the seven States. In 1891 he presided over a National Convention at Sydney and resolutions were drawn up, but the obstacles to a closer union seemed insurmountable and no definite results were achieved.

The years passed on, the land grew and prospered, the immense export of wool brought wealth, men made fortunes with sheep farming, and again Federation seemed to be the only possible solution of the problem.

In the year 1897—the Premiers having returned from attending the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in London *—another Convention met at Adelaide at which all the States—save New Zealand—were represented. A Constitution was drafted, but it was not till 1900 that it met with the final approval of the six States of the Australian nation and was despatched to England for the Royal Assent.

The Bill provided for a Governor-General to represent the Queen, two Houses consisting of a Senate with six representatives from each of the six States, to be elected for six years, and a House of Representatives, containing twice the number in the Senate elected for three years—all members to

* See p. 256.

receive £400 a year for their services. It was the last important document signed by the Queen, some six months before her death, and in order to show her sympathy with this act of true courage on the part of her daughter nation, she wished that her grandson, the Duke of York, and his wife should go in person to Australia to open the first Federal Parliament.

Though the Queen herself passed away in the New Year of 1901, it was the new King's wish that her Majesty's command should be loyally obeyed. And it was a memorable day in the short history of the Island-Continent when the great white *Ophir* steamed into Melbourne Bay, and the heir-apparent to the English throne set foot on Australian soil.

His welcome was cordial and enthusiastic, as through gaily decorated streets, lined with some twelve thousand troops from all parts of Australia, the future Prince and Princess of Wales went to the great Parliament House. As the Prince declared the Parliament open, a message of congratulation was flashed from the King in England: "My thoughts are with you. Most fervently do I wish Australia prosperity and great happiness." Then trumpets blared, guns fired a royal salute and the vast crowds, still in mourning for their late Queen, cheered to the echo, while at a given signal the Union Jack was hoisted on every school in the new Commonwealth.

The Federation of Australia had become at last an accomplished fact; the destinies of the great island had been placed in the hands of a Representative Assembly of colonists.

So Australia started on her new career—with

every prospect of success. She was a young and vigorous people, living in a land of sunshine, a land of boundless resource, of varied beauty.

She was the most British country outside Great Britain herself. Canada had her French people, South Africa had her Dutch, but the Australian had no foreign blood; he was of pure British descent and therefore one of the strongest bonds of the Empire.

"God requite thee, my Sister, through the wonderful years to be,
And make thy people to love thee as thou hast loved me."

LIII

THE PASSING OF THE QUEEN
(1901)

"So be my passing,
My task accomplished and the long day done."
—HENLEY.

THE opening of the new century found the war in South Africa still dragging wearily on, though the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, was able to return home, leaving the end to Lord Kitchener of Khartum. The Queen had sorrowed deeply over the war: it had undoubtedly clouded the last years of her life: she had longed for the tidings of peace, but these came too late for her to hear.

Vague rumours had reached the outside world that all was not well with the Queen, but nothing definite was known outside the Court circle. She now insisted on an interview with Lord Roberts, so that she might hear with her own ears the prospects of peace. To those who saw her ever-increasing weakness, there was cause for alarm in the coming interview on such a critical subject as the war. But the Queen was firm, and she gathered together her sinking energies for this final task.

This was early in January. Some days later an alarm was sounded: "The Queen had not been lately in her usual health." Through the length and breadth of her great Empire the news ran, causing widespread anxiety. It was followed by a yet more ominous announcement: "The Queen was suffering from physical prostration."

Men recalled her eighty-one years, her strenuous life, her sorrows and anxieties, her ceaseless toil, and shook their heads. On Sunday, January 20th, the tidings grew yet more serious, and few can forget the heavy gloom that settled down over the country.

Two days later she passed peacefully away, and the longest reign in the annals of English history was over.

Never through the long centuries had monarch been more beloved than was Britain's great Queen —Victoria. "She passed away," said one of her statesmen, "without an enemy in the world, for even those who loved not England loved her."

She was mourned with a depth of reality to which few parallels can be found in the history of nations. All jealousies were forgotten; and her personal character, now fully understood in its kindliness, its simplicity, its unshrinking devotion to duty, its purity and goodness, inspired universal respect and genuine affection. From every part of the world came expressions of love and admiration, and the solemn funeral military procession through the heart of the Empire testified to world-wide sorrow.

They laid her, not with the other Kings and Queens of England in Westminster Abbey, but at Windsor, beside him whom she had loved and forty

long years before laid to rest there, till God's love set her at his side again.

Little else was spoken of but the Queen's wonderful life. Her subjects loved to dwell on her high example as wife and mother. They spoke of how simply and naturally she had brought up her children, how she had encouraged their work and play, how she had surrounded them with her great mother love, and how, when the trouble of her life came to her with the death of the Prince Consort, her children were her strength and her comfort. It seemed in those heartbroken days as if the Poet Laureate's words rang true—

> The love of all Thy sons encompass thee,
> The love of all Thy daughters cherish thee,
> The love of all Thy people comfort thee."

Three of her children had passed on before her. In 1878 the Princess Alice, wife of Prince Louis of Hesse, died of diphtheria, caught from nursing one of her children. Six years later Leopold, Duke of Albany died, leaving a widow and two young children, while only a few months before her own death her second son, Alfred, Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha died, having never recovered from the death of his only son a year before.

Three grandsons of the Queen died before the dawn of the twentieth century; for the Duke of Clarence, heir after the Prince of Wales to the throne, succumbed to an attack of influenza in 1892, and Prince Christian Victor died in the South African War.

But even private sorrows were never allowed to interfere with affairs of State, which weighed unceasingly upon her, often overwhelming her with work and anxiety.

"The Queen will do what she can to meet the loyal wishes of her subjects," she said once, when pressure was brought to bear upon her to appear more often in public for the encouragement of trade. "More the Queen cannot do, and more the kindness and good feeling of her people will surely not exact of her."

Thus during the last thirty-nine years of her life she only opened Parliament in person seven times, neither did she prorogue Parliament once since 1854. But if these State functions had become impossible to her, she never lost her hold on the real business of the State. No sovereign of England ever studied more closely than Queen Victoria every detail of Government policy; no sovereign ever corresponded more energetically with her ever-changing Ministers of State.

How much the greatness of the Victorian era was due to the Queen it is impossible to say. It has been truly remarked that "she has honoured Science, she has patronised Art, she has fostered Music, she has encouraged Literature, she has recognised Greatness, she has stimulated Progress."

She lived through a period of breathless activity, she ruled over a kingdom that seemed to grow daily larger, she had to face questions of unparalleled difficulty, and it remained an undisputed fact that at the end of her life her influence was much greater than at her accession to the English throne.

When she came to the throne, the Government of the country was almost entirely in the hands of the rich men and middle class of England; the people had no voice in the laws of the land. When she died, the government was passing into the hands

of the people. Yet, despite these fundamental changes, the Queen maintained the Constitution in a way it had never been maintained before; she became the very heart and centre of that Imperial Unity that every passing year left stronger and more true.

And so, amid all the changes and against a varying background of political strife, one dominating figure stands forth, and that a Woman—capable, industrious, true to the heart's core, possessed of a "passionate patriotism" for her country, and with a great love that throbbed to the most distant end of her mighty Empire, animating and inspiring every subject of her realm, till, when the eighty-two years of life had passed away, she was honoured and beloved by all.

Such was Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India, who left to her successor, Edward VII., the additional title of "King of the British Dominions beyond the Seas."

LIV

INTER-IMPERIAL TRADE

"They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother: Be of good courage."—Isa. xli. 6.

THE British Isles—the cradle of the British race—has during the Victorian era acquired an Empire overseas a hundred times her own size.

At her death, in 1901, the Queen was ruler over one-fifth of the earth's surface, and more than one-fifth of the world's inhabitants.

The story of how she possessed herself of so large a share of the world's richest lands has already been told. We have seen how the missionaries, the adventurers, the explorers found, discovered, colonised the new lands and the traders invariably followed.

Thus the British Empire was founded on trade, and exists on trade. Before ever the Queen came to the throne England, by reason of her steam power and ready production of coal and iron, had turned from an agricultural to a manufacturing country. And at the time of the Queen's accession she had already had a long start of the rest of the world. Added to this, she had also the command of the sea, and the finest merchant service in the world.

As new lands came under the Queen's sway, the

people in these new lands naturally looked to England to supply their needs. They needed materials for development and protection, they needed the luxuries of modern civilised life. England then circulated throughout the Empire arms and ammunition for their defence, machinery and tools for their manufactures, railway, telegraph, and electrical appliances for their closer communication, steel work for their bridges, water and gas pipes, ready-made clothing of cotton and wool, soap, candles, books, pictures, glass, china, drugs, pianos, and all the thousand necessaries which they could obtain from her.

In return, as the new countries grew and developed, they were able to produce more food-stuffs than their own small populations could consume. They therefore sent their supplies home to the Mother Country, which no longer could supply herself with food. There was a further reason—the Mother Country exacted no duties on goods brought into the country; she indulged in a system of Free Trade, while most other countries demanded that duties should be paid.

Thus—roughly—Great Britain sent one-third of her exports to the colonies, receiving one-quarter of her total imports from them. And as the British Isles were now for the most part manufacturing, and the colonies were mainly agricultural and pastoral, the exchange was highly beneficial to both.

To sum up, about the time of the Queen's death—

Canada was sending home one-half of her total exports—wheat, bacon, cheese, salt, fish, eggs, apples, furs skins, leather, timber and wood-pulp—receiving in return one-quarter of her total imports from Great Britain.

Australia also sent half her exports home. Amongst these were wool, tallow, fresh mutton, preserved meat, silver and gold ore, hides, furs, skins, wheat and flour, butter, rabbits, and wine. She received in return one-half of her imports.

New Zealand sent three-quarters of her total exports home, including wool, gold, grain, hides, skins, butter, and cheese, receiving in return three-fifths of her imports.

South Africa sent four-fifths of her total exports home, including gold, diamonds, and other precious stones, ostrich feathers, skins, hides, furs, and receiving in return three-fifths of her imports.

India sent a quarter of her exports home, including rice, cotton and silk, jute, oil, seeds, tea, coffee, and teak. She received from Great Britain half her total imports.

Thus Great Britain's colonial trade represented one-quarter of her entire trade with the rest of the world.

But not only was this interchange of wealth going on between the Mother Country and her colonies, but the colonies traded very freely with one another; thus Australia and New Zealand supplied South Africa with frozen meat and butter, Canada sent largely to Australia, the West Indies, &c.

But when all was said and done, the Mother Country was still the great Imperial banker of all her colonial possessions. She was still the heart of the Empire. "She pumps the life-giving stream of capital through a thousand arteries to every limb of the Imperial body." She was not only a trader, but the greatest banker in the world. And this enabled her to build up her vast Empire. To keep her trade she had to preserve her trade routes and

coaling stations, she linked together every part of her scattered possessions by submarine cables, she added ships yearly to her huge mercantile marine until at the Queen's death she owned half the carrying trade of the whole world.

At the Queen's accession, Great Britain employed 624 steamers and thirty times as many sailing ships to carry her commerce far and wide to foreign lands. At her death there were over 9,000 steamers, carrying seventy times the old tonnage, and 10,773 sailing ships, large and small. But even as the last years of the great Age died away, and the Queen passed to her well-earned rest, shadows were beginning to fall athwart the horizon of England's trade prospects.

The vital value of sea power was dawning on the growing nations of the world; the United States and Germany were putting forth strenuous efforts to compete successfully with England's great merchant service, and were building great fleets for their protection.

The fact that England almost alone of all nations had Free Trade (her import duties being mainly on spirits, tobacco, tea, wine, cocoa, chicory, coffee, and dried fruits) was beginning to make itself felt in the great competition for trade that was springing up throughout the world, and men were beginning to consider the possibility of a change.

For while Great Britain had derived great benefits from her system of Free Trade in many respects, especially in regard to cheap food, the country was beginning to suffer in its trade from the fact that most of the other nations had not adopted Free Trade, but imposed heavy duties on goods imported from Great Britain, while their goods were admitted to this country free of duty.

The Queen died when her Empire of Trade was yet at its height, leaving her vast heritage to those who may have to decide its destiny before very long. In doing so they will not forget their great responsibility.

"Our Fathers in a wondrous Age,
Ere yet the Earth was small,
Ensured to us an heritage
And doubted not at all
That we, the children of their heart,
Which then did beat so high,
In later time should play like part
For our posterity.

* * * *

Dear-bought, and clear a thousand years,
Our fathers' title runs;
Make we likewise their sacrifice,
Defrauding not our sons."

LV

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

"Fair is our lot—O, goodly is our heritage!"
—KIPLING.

THE story of the Great Victorian Age is now drawing to its end, and it only remains for us to review very briefly the past, and by its strong light to peer tentatively forward into the dim and unknown future.

We have noted the chief forces at work, without which the Empire could never have existed—the use of steam and the discovery of coal and iron which had already turned England from an agricultural to a manufacturing and wealthy country; the consequent and rapid growth of her population, necessitating expansion; the existence of that old Viking spirit to do and dare which urged Englishmen of the nineteenth century to go forth and colonise new lands beyond the seas: the mutual trading between the Mother Country and her Daughter Nations that naturally followed; the development of rapid communication, and the triumph of English ship-building.

These are but the leading features of this "live and throbbing Age," which has seen the growth of the British Empire, the burden of which will rest

upon the shoulders of the children of to-day. It will be well, then, to glance for a moment at the government of these possessions in order to rightly understand that responsibility.

As each colony grew in strength, it demanded the right of self-government. England conceded this right at once, and local government was granted by Act of Parliament, while an English Governor was sent from home to uphold English traditions and, on important matters, to consult the British Government.

But as communications grew closer by reason of railway and telegraph, it became inconvenient for each colony to have its own Governor and its separate code of laws, friction ensued, and the separate States in each continent found it better to unite under one Governor-General.

Canada, at the Queen's death, had a Constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom, at the head of which was the Queen, represented by a Governor-General, a Privy Council, a Senate, and a House of Commons composed of members from the States of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and the North-West Territories.

Australia, at the Queen's death, had decided on a Federation, to be managed by a Governor-General, an Executive Council, a Senate, and a House of Representatives consisting of members from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. New Zealand was invited to join this Federation, but she could not see her way; so she had a Governor, who was also her Commander-in-Chief, a Legislative Council, and a House of Representatives.

The Federation of the States of Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal, and Rhodesia was not even foreshadowed in South Africa on the death of the Queen.

Though based on the Constitution of the Mother Country, each of these English-speaking nations was free and their independent freedom was shown in many different ways. None of them adopted England's system of Free Trade, none of them instituted a State Church, two of them gave votes to women, and most of them paid their members of Parliament.

On the other hand, they looked to England for their defence by sea, to England's wealth and support in commercial enterprise, to England's industry for their railways, telegraphs, clothing, and other luxuries.

And above and beyond this material dependence, the colonists still looked on Great Britain as Home. It was still the land of their forefathers, and though divided by thousands of miles of sea from each other and from the Mother Country, they felt they were all one land.

"The snows of the Canadian Rockies, the woods of New Zealand, the great plains of Australia, the lonely veldt of South Africa, the crowded streets of London—the heart of the Empire—belonged to one People. Their pleasures and troubles—their glories and misfortunes, their riches and poverty, their men and women, above all their problems, belonged to all."

But there were other parts of the Empire which did not manage their own affairs, whose people were not English-born, but who were under the direct control of Great Britain.

Of these Dependencies, the most important was India, with its three hundred millions of dark-skinned races. The Englishman who lived in India was there either to govern, to defend, or to trade. The country was governed by a British Viceroy representing the Queen, Empress of India, assisted by two Governors, four Lieutenant-Governors, and several Chief Commissioners, but in no sense was it a home for the English.

Burma, too, was included under the Viceroy of India, with a Lieutenant-Governor of her own.

The Straits Settlements were not under the Viceroy, but under an English Governor, who was also High Commissioner for the Federated Malay States and for North Borneo.

The West Indies had six English Governors, the Falkland Islands had one, British Guiana one, British Honduras one, Fiji and the Western Pacific Islands had one; while the many "stepping-stones" of the Empire—Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Aden, St. Helena, Mauritius, Ceylon, Hong Kong, and Wei-hai-Wei—had each their English Governor or High Commissioner.

The British Protectorate of Uganda was under a Commissioner, the East Africa Protectorate was under a High Commissioner, Zanzibar under a Consul-General, Nigeria under two High Commissioners, Bechuanaland and Basutoland under Resident Commissioners.

Egypt was not a generally recognised Protectorate; she occupied an entirely unique position. England inspired her government, officered her army, managed her military occupation, and guided her finance. An Englishman represented the Queen in Cairo, an English Governor-General ruled the

Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. And because the whole world, as well as Egypt herself, benefit by this control, the great Powers agreed to this arrangement.

It is hard to realise at home what the Empire owed to the men guiding the destinies of these distant lands beyond the seas. Some of them were, at the Queen's death, ruling over countries far larger than England; some lived on lonely islands far from home, some were spending their lives amid unhealthy surroundings; all were statesmen upholding the best traditions of Great Britain, facing dangers, solving problems, giving to others what Englishmen had through long centuries won for themselves, ever mindful of England's glory, ever true to England's Queen.

Such was the varied collection of Colonies, Dependencies, Islands, and Protectorates which gradually fell under England's sway, and were known after the Queen's death as the "Dominions beyond the Seas."

Toward the end of the Queen's long reign the word "Empire" was more often used for these overseas possessions, for it included the Mother Country —it included also a future of wonderful Possibilities.

For the government of England was passing into the hands of the People, and the spirit of individual citizenship, with its great responsibilities, was breaking over the country even as the breathless Victorian Age was passing away.

The People of To-morrow are the Children of To-day. Let them see to it that they fit themselves for this citizenship by Knowledge, Humility, and Self-sacrifice—"humble because of Knowledge, mighty by Sacrifice."

Thus only may they hope to maintain—strong and untarnished—the "goodly Heritage" which fell to them in the Great Victorian Age.

"No doubt but ye are the People—absolute, strong and wise;
Whatever your heart has desired, ye have not withheld from your eyes;
On your own heads, in your own hands, the sin and the saving lies."

THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1901.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

EUROPE.—

Gibraltar, Malta.

ASIA.—

Aden-Perim, Sokota, &c.
Behrein Islands.
Borneo (British).
Ceylon.
Cyprus.
Hongkong.
India and Dependencies (Baluchistan, Sikkim, Andaman Islands, Nicobar Islands, Laccadive Islands).
Labuan.
Straits Settlements.
Federated Malay States.
State of Johor.
Keeling or Cocos Islands.
Christmas Island.
Wei-hai-Wei.

AFRICA.—

Ascension Island.
Basutoland.
Bechuanaland (Protectorate).
Cape of Good Hope.
Central Africa, British (Protectorate).
East Africa (British).
East Africa (Protectorate).
Uganda (Protectorate).

AFRICA (*continued*).—
Zanzibar.
Mauritius.
Natal.
Nigeria, North and South.
Orange River Colony.
Rhodesia.
St. Helena.
Tristan da Cunha.
Seychelles.
Somaliland.
Transvaal.
Swaziland.
West African Colonies.
(The Gold Coast—Lagos, Gambia, Sierra Leone).

AMERICA.—
Bermudas.
Canada.
Falkland Islands.
Guiana (British).
Honduras (British).
Newfoundland and Labrador.
West Indies (Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Windward Islands).

AUSTRALASIA AND OCEANIA.—
New South Wales.
Victoria.
Queensland.
South Australia.
Western Australia.
Tasmania.
New Guinea (British).
New Zealand.
Fiji Islands.
Pacific Islands (Tonga, &c.).

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